



Kent on Sunday

www.kentnews.co.uk June 14, 2015

Mid edition No 664

ENTERTAINMENT

Look who's here...

EastEnders stars shoot scenes in the county

PEOPLE

Queen's Birthday Honours

Find out who picked up an award

FIRE

Counting the cost of Maidstone blaze

Havoc caused to town centre after shop completely destroyed

TRANSPORT

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Which side of the speed debate do you belong to?

WE SEEM to have, at times, a somewhat contradictory approach to the way in which we conduct ourselves on the road.

If someone speeds up behind us and sits an inch from our bumper our blood boils. If we spot someone on a mobile phone we rightly start to fume. Overtake in a daft manner - we get angry.

Yet when it comes to exceeding the speed limit, we take a rather more divided approach. Half of us think nothing of putting our foot down when the conditions dictate and comfortably going over what is legal.

The other, rather less noisy 50 per cent, ponder just how that is OK yet all the other behaviour is somehow worthy of scorn.

After all, the argument goes, if you're travelling at a break-neck speed, above and beyond that we are told to stick

to, you find yourself in charge of a vehicle hurtling along at a speed at which should you encounter any sort of problem, you are simply travelling too fast to avoid.

This division is neatly encapsulated when it comes to our views on speed cameras. Agree we should drive carefully then chances are you think they are a sensible idea. Think you should be able to make up the speed limit to what you think is best, and you cannot abide them.

Inside, we take a look at the sites where most motorists are caught - and reveal a fascinating statistic as to just how many of those bright yellow casings actually have cameras inside them. The results will surprise you.

But perhaps no more than the behaviour of many of us when behind the wheel who seem to disconnect brain from accelerator pedal.



Editor **Chris Britcher**

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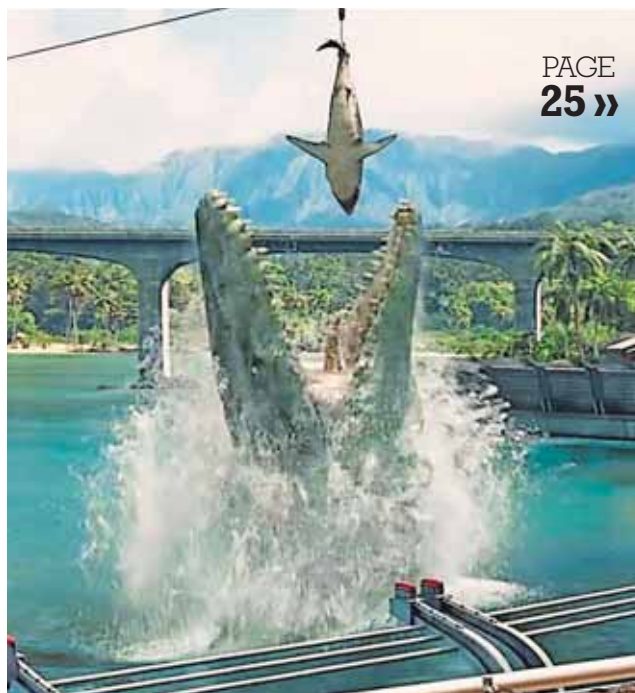
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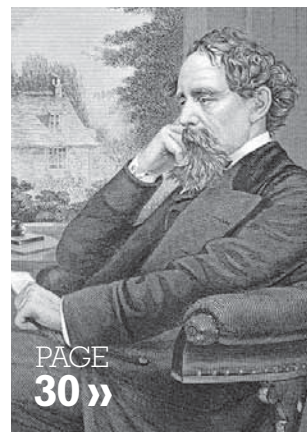
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Published in Kent and printed by Archant Print, division of Archant Community Media Limited (Co Reg No 19300). Registered Office: Prospect House, Rouen Road, Norwich NR1 1RE

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Royal seal of approval as chief constable honoured

By Jamie Weir

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KENT's top police officer, Alan Pughsley, has been named in the Queen's Birthday Honours.

The chief constable received the prestigious Queen's Police Medal for his services to policing. It is awarded for distinguished service.

His award will come at a time when he is facing some of his toughest professional decisions as Kent Police faces swingeing cuts from central government.

Speaking after the list was announced on Saturday, Chief Constable Pughsley said: "I am delighted.

"Throughout my career, I have worked with some amazing people and seen some significant changes and challenges in policing.

"I continue to be committed to ensuring that we deliver a first class service in policing.

"I regularly join my officers out on the beat, and ensure that we continue to police at the front line, as well as making the right strategic decisions to meet the challenges of policing in the county."

He has served on the force since



HONOURED: Alan Pughsley was among those to receive an award from the Queen. Pic: ADY KERRY

1984, when he cut his teeth with London's Metropolitan Police Service, working in a variety of roles. He first came to the county in 2009, joining as assistant chief constable for specialist operations. He rose through the ranks, being appointed chief constable in January 2014.

He joined 27 others from Kent on the honours' list.

Among them were Natalie Elphicke, from Dover, who received

an OBE for her services to housing as the chairman of the not-for-profit group, Million Homes. She is also the wife of Conservative MP for Dover Charlie Elphicke.

Kent County Council's head of adoption and improvement, Yashi Shah, received an MBE.

She received the honour for her services to children and families.

Top legal mind Charles Plant of Tunbridge Wells picked up the

highest honour among Kent's recipients.

He was awarded the CBE in the honours list for his work in legal education and regulation, particularly as chairman of the Solicitors Regulation Authority Board, which sets the standards for the industry.

The Queen's Honours List is issued twice a year - once at New Year and then again to mark her official birthday.

KCC sets out 'red lines' in TfL talks to extend its rail link into county

COUNTY council chiefs say they have set out a series of "non-negotiable red lines" to protect fares and services for the county's rail commuters as Transport for London (TfL) seeks to take over the running of some services from Southeastern.

During talks on Tuesday, TfL discussed its proposal to transfer south east London Metro services to its franchise operator, London Overground Railway.

Speaking at the London Assembly transport committee, Matthew Ballfour, Kent County Council cabinet member for environment and transport, laid out the council's commitment to protecting the county's commuters.

He said: "There are a number of potential benefits to the county's rail users. However, we are absolutely clear that we will not accept any reduction in service levels as a result of Metro services being transferred.

"We have also stated there must be no detrimental effect on Kent's rail

fares following transfer of Metro services and this would need to be guaranteed as part of the transfer agreement between the Department for Transport, TfL and the new franchisee. This would also be one of our 'red lines' that we have stated from the start is non-negotiable.

"While discussions are in the early stages, it is clear that there could be real benefits for Kent's rail passengers through extension of TfL's Oystercard and/or smartcard ticketing to Gravesend and Sevenoaks."

KCC will also investigate other possible benefits, such as faster journeys by omitting some stops such as St Mary Cray on Maidstone East services, as this station would be served by the planned four-trains per hour Thameslink service.

TfL would aim to complete discussion so that the proposals could form part of the franchise award for the present Southeastern operating area in June 2018.

Visible policing vow despite funding still being slashed

POLICE and Crime Commissioner Ann Barnes has vowed to keep spending on frontline officers - despite the force facing funding cuts from central government.

Mrs Barnes also said, in her capacity managing the force's budget, she would ensure victims were put first despite the fact cuts would have 'inevitable consequences'.

She said: "Forces across the

country are having to cut costs but in Kent the chief constable and I share a vision which means the two overarching principles of my Police and Crime Plan - visible community policing and ensuring victims are at the heart of the criminal justice system - will not be compromised."

Kent Police has seen £50m in cuts so far - with an estimated further £61m cuts by 2019.

Dozens arrested during first week of motorist crackdown

MORE than 30 motorists have been arrested during the first week of a major new crackdown on driving offences.

As part of a month-long road safety awareness campaign, police have worked alongside the county council's road safety team and other organisations.

Between June 1 and 7, 37 drivers were netted for either drink

driving, or driving under the influence of drugs by police. Officers have also given out a raft of tickets - 12 in total - for drivers using mobile phones.

Inspector Martin Stevens said: "Though we are always on the lookout for people driving irresponsibly, this month we have extra road safety checks being conducted."



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Council completes shopping centre takeover

A SHOPPING complex this week confirmed a takeover had been finalised by the local council.

Ashford Borough Council increased its property portfolio with the purchase of the Park Mall Shopping Centre in the town centre. It follows the acquisition of the Wilkinson store in May and office buildings International House and Dover Place last year.

Council leader Gerry Clarkson said: "We are stepping in and taking action in order to rejuvenate the area.

"We have heard people say that the town centre needs revamping and we are addressing those concerns. Buying Park Mall brings it into local ownership, creates an asset and income stream for the council and will enable us to develop the town centre."



RISK: Shane Skinner next to boat

Furious row over airport takes off as fellow Tories lock horns on its future

By Jamie Weir

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AN ANGRY war of words has erupted between two top Conservative figures in the county, with a senior MP calling on the leader of Kent County Council to consider his position over the future of Manston Airport.

The Thanet airfield has been closed for more than a year and was recently sold to developers who have unveiled a number of proposals which includes residential and commercial plans.

Ukip, which now leads Thanet District Council, has resurrected plans to examine a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) on the site - a power which would enable it to use public funds to buy the airhub and then immediately sell it to US-based operator RiverOak which has vowed to re-open the business as a cargo-based operation.

But Sir Roger Gale, long-time MP for Thanet North, this week hit out at Cllr Carter.

The KCC leader says he could not



ATTACKED: KCC's Paul Carter

back the CPO plans as no credible business plan has yet been proposed. KCC has, in the past, invested £100,000 in the airport only to see it falter.

Sir Roger said: "My personal reputation has been placed on the line.

Will the current leader of KCC place his own reputation on the line also and do the honourable thing if he is found further wanting?"

In a letter responding to Sir Roger's outburst, Cllr Carter insisted he had been consistent in his views on Manston. He said: "We will continue to act in a way that leads to the right decisions to be made that will lead to economic growth, jobs and prosperity in the east of Kent.

"I realise my views may be different but nevertheless the debate should be open, transparent and evidenced. I would point out that attracting significant inward investment into the economically challenging parts of Kent is not easy. We are in grave danger of stifling confidence in east Kent.

"Should you have evidence to provide me on the robustness and strength of RiverOak's proposition I would be pleased if you would share this with me because, as you know, so far RiverOak have yet you be forthcoming with their financial plans, business case and financial backing."

MEP delight as TTIP vote is postponed

KENT Green MEP Keith Taylor says a European Parliament vote on a controversial free trade agreement between the EU and US was cancelled this week due to "huge public opposition".

The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) was to be voted upon on Tuesday. But the vote was cancelled for a host of amendments - more than 200 were tabled - after more than two million EU citizens signed a petition opposing the agreement.

MEP for the south east, Mr Taylor said: "TTIP represents a monumental power grab by corporations and it must be stopped.

"It seeks to remove standards and protections enshrined in laws across the EU and the US, including labour rights that protect people at work, environmental regulations and food safety laws.

"Many MEPs have warned that one clause would allow corporations to sue governments in secret courts if a government passed laws which limited a corporation's profits or activity."

£7m cocaine haul is intercepted at port

COCAINE with a street value of around £7 million was seized at Dover's Eastern Docks last weekend.

Border Force officers discovered the 149 kilos of drugs at the inward coach controls after stopping a Romanian registered coach carrying 43 passengers.

The coach was searched using a sniffer dog, with the drugs eventually found inside the bodywork. Three men were arrested at the scene, with the investigation being passed over to the National Crime Agency.

Two men from Romania appeared before magistrates in Folkestone this week before being remanded in custody. They will next appear before Maidstone Crown Court on June 26. A third was released on bail.

Paul Morgan, director of Border Force South East and Europe said: "Every year Border Force officers seize hundreds of millions of pounds of Class A drugs.

"This is another example of how our officers have prevented dangerous class A drugs from ending up on the streets of the UK."

Long jail term after blowing up her home

A 38-YEAR-old woman who tried to kill herself and three others by blowing up her house in Canterbury has been jailed for 18 years.

On April 18 last year Pearl D'Souza disconnected the gas supply pipe behind the cooker in her kitchen before setting fire to it with a lighter.

It was only she saw the flames and changed her mind that emergency services were called to the property, saving the lives of three other people.

All four people in the house were taken to hospital to be treated for smoke inhalation. D'Souza was subsequently arrested and charged with three counts of attempted murder and arson with intent to endanger life.

She pleaded guilty last September and this week appeared before Canterbury Crown Court where she was ordered to serve 18 years in prison with four years extended licence for each of the attempted murder charges to run concurrently.

Det Insp Janine Farrell said: "It was only her lack of knowledge about the levels of gas required to cause an explosion that prevented fatalities."

agenda

What will make next week's headlines...

DFDS sails towards MyFerryLink deal

TALKS will continue this week to finalise a deal which will see cross-Channel firm DFDS take over two of the ferries currently being operated by MyFerryLink.

A binding offer was submitted to MyFerryLink's owner, Eurotunnel, this week with the deal going through on July 2. It follows

Eurotunnel's confirmation last month it was disposing of MyFerryLink following a long-running legal row over its share of the competitive market.

Hopes the SCOP SeaFrance, the French workers' union which staffed MyFerryLink, would gain sufficient support to propose a



takeover, came to nothing.

As a consequence, MyFerryLink's long association with Kent on Sunday's Images of Kent page has now ended.

Anger brews over plans for free-range egg farm

A DATE is set to be confirmed this week for a public exhibition over a controversial planning application for a huge new poultry house near Horsmonden.

Local egg producer Fridays wants to build a site to accommodate 64,000 free range hens at Pullens Farm in Lamberhurst Road.

However, villagers say it will spoil an areas of outstanding natural beauty and intend to fight the plans.

Andrew Watts, at Fridays, said: "The proposal would ensure the continued use of agricultural land for food production, within a visually contained site."

...also

Barnes at the outlet

ANN BARNES will be at the Ashford Designer Outlet on Friday to discuss community safety concerns and local policing priorities.

She will be in the food court from 12.45pm until 2.45pm.

Go behind-the-scenes

THE doors of Folkestone's Creative Quarter will be thrown open next weekend for a behind-the-scenes look at the creative community.

It runs from 5.30pm on Friday until Sunday. Visit www.creativequarterfolkestone.org.uk for more information.

Train engineering works

TRAVELLERS planning to use the rail network this weekend should be aware of engineering work taking place between Faversham and Ramsgate.

The line will be closed between 3am and 8.15am with a replacement bus.

Soldiers head to Latvia

GURKHAS based in the county have this week started jetting out to Latvia to join NATO countries for military training.

The UK is providing 230 troops to join troops from the US, Baltic and Scandinavian states.

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How e-readers are writing the next chapter for independent bookshops

Supermarkets and digital have seen a major decline in stores across the county. **Chris Britcher** reports

DEPENDING on your choice of statistic, either the sale of physical books is in terminal decline or enjoying something of a revival.

Facing the threat of the boom in e-readers - the charge being led by Amazon's variety of Kindle machines - the way we consume our literature is evolving.

And, just like music before it, the shift to digital product is punching a hole in the profit margins of the traditional bricks and mortar high street retailers.

The big question now is whether the trend will, as with record stores before them, see bookshops hounded into nostalgic oblivion.

According to findings from Neilsen Book Research, the e-book share from 2012-2014 has shot up from one in five books sold to one in three. However, before the Kindle and its kin start claiming victory, statistics for the first quarter of 2015 saw that figure slightly slip.

But the book-selling landscape has changed so dramatically over recent years, the fate of the independent bookshop - so cherished by many as a

WILL NEXT GENERATION BE BOOK STRANGERS?

WHERE once buying a book involved going to a shop or waiting for the postman, today you can order a small library at the touch of a button and have the collection literally in the palm of your hand within mere seconds.

But is there a danger e-readers, such as the Kindle, and tablets could see a whole generation become

strangers to the printed book?

"I'm absolutely sure that will happen," says Sarah Webb-Wilson from Sevenoaks Bookshop. "If schools move towards e-readers and tablets as many already are, then there will be a chunk of a generation they only read on screen and don't see the physical book at all."

Figures from Neilsen BookScan for 2014 revealed sales of printed adult fiction were down £150m since 2009 - almost entirely put down to migration to digital. However, all is not lost. Mrs Webb-Wilson added: "The romance of the book is coming back. People are looking at beautifully produced books."

fixture on their high street - has been victim to some blood-letting.

Stabbed by the supermarkets at first, they find themselves now being constantly battered by the internet and online retailers. Only, it seems, the toughest, have survived. Between 2005 and 2014 the numbers declined by 35 per cent - comfortably less than 1,000 across the entire UK now exist.

Sarah Webb-Wilson and Valerie Glencross have run Sevenoaks Bookshop in the High Street for the last 15 years. The shop itself has existed since 1948.

Explains Mrs Webb-Wilson: "Clearly the market is difficult but then re-

tail has always been a challenge.

"But there's no point being gloomy. It's easy to talk yourself out of a business, but the problems are not insurmountable. Listen to the customers and do your best to satisfy them."

She admits it was the deep discounts served up by supermarkets - many of whom sell the top titles at a loss in order to lure people into their stores (so-called 'loss leaders') - which dealt the harshest blow.

She explains: "It certainly had a huge impact. It took away a lot of the mainstream sales. We stopped stocking any mass market paperbacks or Jamie Oliver books because super-

markets were selling them at half price, way below the sort of discounts we could get.

"We changed our stock to suit our customers."

In addition, it has looked to provide add-ons to cement its role in the community, such as a coffee shop and a regular writers' group.

Later this month sees Independent Bookshop Week - a chance to shine the light on those traders who continue to fight the good fight against the apparent evolution of the book market.

Ellie Addenbrook, along with Andreea White, run A Bundle of Books in



SUCCESS: Sevenoaks Bookshop

Herne Bay - aimed at children.

She explains: "I think book shops will fare better than record shops, but there's no getting around it independent shops cannot compete with places like Amazon or the supermarkets."

"We don't get the same discount as they do. And they tend to sell their books at a loss."

"For children's books, it's slightly different."

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CHOICE: Tablets and e-readers are proving increasingly popular for readers. But printed book sales continue to hold up...for now at least

"A lot of parents accept the fact you have to have something in their hand, for them to turn the page. Especially things like the touchy-feely books, or those with pictures, which simply don't translate onto an e-reader.

"Unless you have somebody really into having an actual book to encourage having a book in your hand

over an e-reader, it's very easy to go straight to an e-reader because that's what we're used to I suppose."

But economics are always a pressure; especially when it comes to the price of books.

"Go to the cinema and one adult ticket is £10," she says. "It's really expensive but people don't quibble

about that. But they come into a book shop and say £6.99 is a lot for a book. But it isn't really given the talents poured into it. But it's getting that message across.

"And when Amazon and supermarkets sell so cheap, people don't value the books as much which is a real shame."

Erica Jones, from Tunbridge Wells, has, for the last two years, compiled a popular online blog The Bookshop Around the Corner, a self-styled 'celebration of bookshops'.

She is convinced the independent bookshop has an essential role to play.

"Essentially it's the whole experi-

ence," she explains. "If you go into an indie you know everyone working there will love books, you can talk about your favourites, say you've never read one and where to start, mention a character you like and immediately you'll start a conversation.

"It's a case of you're automatically amongst friends.

"But they are faring badly and it's mostly because of the internet. People go into bookshops take pictures of books they like and then order them online.

"But Amazon, for example, is not necessarily cheaper now it has put postage charges back on."

Independent Bookshop Week runs from June 20-27 and is organised by the Booksellers' Association.

Shops taking part will be running a series of special events and promotions throughout the week.

A Bundle of Books in Herne Bay, for example, will have authors and illustrators coming in for talks and workshops, plus a children's book trail stretching out across the town.

A spokesman for the event's organisers explained: "We are celebrating what they bring to the book trade that larger companies cannot - individuality, a more personal approach to service, involvement within the local community.

"And simply keeping the uniqueness of our high streets alive and not just a sea of the same shops across the country."

A number of Kent stores will be taking part.

For details on the week, and how you can get involved, see the website: www.independentbooksellersweek.org.uk.

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CHEERS: Stars enjoy ice cream at Morelli's popular parlour



EastEnders swap Walford Square for our coastline

Stars of the BBC1 soap opera spent two days in and around Thanet this week to shoot emotional scenes for the final send-off of one of its favourite characters

TOP BBC soap opera EastEnders spent several days in Thanet this week - shooting scenes in and around Broadstairs and Ramsgate.

A host of the biggest names from the long-running BBC1 show shot scenes in popular ice cream parlour Morelli's in Victoria Parade and took a stroll along the promenade.

The stars were also spotted shooting scenes on the beach.

Among the cast shooting the location scenes - and taking a rare break from Walford Square - were actor Danny Dyer, who plays pub landlord Mick Carter.

Other stars included Luisa Bradshaw-White who plays

Tina Carter, Linda Henry who plays Shirley Carter and Annette Badland who plays Aunt Babe.

The stars were shooting scenes for a future episode related to the storyline of Stan

Carter, played by Timothy West, who was seen dying of cancer in April.

It is believed the scenes show the Carter family scattering the ashes of the character.

The emotional farewell saw crews shooting over two days - starting on Tuesday.

Mr Dyer, 37, stopped and posed for photographs with a number of fans who spotted him.



LOCATION: Luisa Bradshaw-White (who plays Tina Carter), Linda Henry (Shirley Carter) and Annette Badland (Aunt Babe) joined Danny Dyer (Mick Carter) as scenes were shot in a variety of locations across Thanet this week





DECLINE? Church leaders say latest statistics do not tell the complete story of the Church of England's continuing deep-rooted role in our communities

Praying for salvation... challenge facing Church of England's future

Former Archbishop claims it could be 'extinct in a generation'. But **Sarah Linney** finds there's life left yet

SENIOR Church of England figures in the county have hit back at claims by a former Archbishop of Canterbury that it is "one generation away from extinction".

But many accept things do need to change to ensure the Church retains a significant role in our lives.

According to a public opinion poll called the British Social Attitudes Survey, just 17 per cent of people in the UK now describe their beliefs as being Church of England or Anglican – a drop of 1.7 million people in just two years. Some 49 per cent of people said they had no belief.

This was followed by the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord George Carey, issuing his stark warning.

So why is our country's official religion so unpopular? Kes Grant, the chaplain of St Augustine's School in Maidstone, says the Church is stuck in the dark ages.

"People's lives change, and the way people express love has changed. People want to live together, but they don't necessarily want to get married first, and the mindset has changed over same-sex relationships," she said.

"But the Church is still playing catch-up on some of those changes. We have had a female prime minister, yet we are arguing about whether women should be bishops.

"We need to protect the message

that we love everybody, we help everybody, and we offer the same service to everybody. But all people see is that we keep arguing about things that are irrelevant to the rest of society."

And she says that if the Church doesn't move forward, it will continue to decline.

"I think people would come if they felt challenged, accepted and loved – but I don't think the Church can win back the people it's lost in the way it's expressing itself now," Ms Grant said.

"More priests should become like chaplains, who are there for people of all faiths and none. They should try just to give away the love of God, instead of asking people if they are worthy.

"Christianity expresses what I believe, and if I run a service in church that's what people are getting. But does that mean that I have to say that everyone else is wrong?"

However, she says there also has to be more to church than Sunday services.

"We need to stop counting people in pews and look at the community work we do," Ms Grant said.

"In my church in south London, the congregation is about 35, but the community work we do is thriving. We work with a couple of hundred people each week, from giving them advice on where they can get help with debt to running play sessions and coffee mornings or just giving adults a listening ear.

"The 700 young people I work with don't go to church, but they have a full-time priest."

The Bishop of Dover, the Rt Rev Trevor Willmott, says the figures are not as bad as the survey suggests.

"Statistics are collected annually by the Church, and around a million people attend church in England every week," he said.

"There has been a decline in attendance over the last decade of about one per cent year on year, but the figures are not nearly as alarming as some might lead us to believe.

"In the Canterbury diocese, for example, attendance has remained relatively constant over the last five years, and Christmas and Easter attendance has increased – nearly 60,000 people attend a Christmas service each year.

"I believe there is an increasing spiritual hunger – a desire for answers to the big questions which cannot be answered by money, possessions or status."

He pointed out that in the 2011 census, nearly 60 per cent of people said they were Christians.

But he agreed the Church needed to reverse the decline in numbers.

"Our challenge is to better meet the needs of today's society," Bishop Trevor said.

"Here in Canterbury diocese we have put in place strategies to grow the church and reach out to commu-

nities. Services are not just held on Sundays, and take place in venues as varied as pubs, community halls and coffee shops.

"Messy church, a relaxed form of all-age worship, is experiencing tremendous growth in numbers, from infants through to grandparents.

"Increasingly our churches are also meeting social needs through the provision of debt advice, lunch clubs for the elderly, community hubs and winter shelters for the homeless."

The Bishop of Tonbridge, the Rt Rev Brian Castle, also pointed out that the figures conflicted with other data.

"There is a bit of a question mark over their reliability," he said.

"I was very surprised to see them, as if there had been such a dramatic fall we probably would have known it was coming.

"Around 55 per cent of our churches are losing followers, but 45 per cent are keeping steady or going up.

"However, the Church can never be complacent about working hard and making sure it gets the message out, not just in words, but in deeds, and is engaged in the community through things like children's clubs and foodbanks. We need to make sure we are listening to what's happening in society."

He said he thought various factors were leading to the decline in followers. "Time is always an issue – there are so many other activities that com-

pete with church," Bishop Brian said.

"It may be the way people talk about religion that puts people off – people are often seen talking about disputes in terms of religion.

"But faith and religion are still significant forces around the world.

"We have to be clear, and more focused, in our message, and engage with some of the really big questions society is struggling with, such as materialism, in a vibrant way."

The rector of the King's Wood group of churches near Ashford, Paul Ratcliff, agreed that the church needed to modernise.

"The Church has been a bit stuck in the Victorian approach, with high levels of formality, traditional music and liturgy which is quite archaic. For some that's attractive, but a lot of people may think it's a bit dull.

"We should still offer the regular services that a lot of people value highly, but we also need to offer services that appeal to young people and children.

"We should encourage people to be sharing their faith with family and friends. Faith as a part of people's lives is much more important than coming to church on a Sunday.

"I think that Jesus Christ is as relevant today as he ever has been and always will be. The gospel has the power to be transformational in our world, and to change lives."



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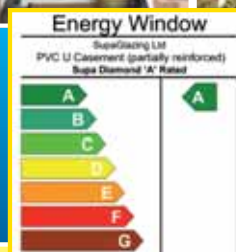
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Is it time for us to re-evaluate the benefits of the video game?

Maria Chiorando takes a fresh look at a debate which continues to rage over the impact on our younger generation of latest wave of gaming...

A VIDEO games expert has rubbished claims the latest generation of software is bad for the health of youngsters.

The latest salvo in the long-running saga of whether games are potentially damaging was fired by Kate Kneale, director of Marine Studio, a Margate-based company which delivers the annual Geek Festival – a celebration of gaming through the ages – at the town's Winter Gardens each year.

She says that it is too easy to concentrate on the negative aspects of some of the more violent games, which are not designed for children, and ignore the positive.

She told KoS: "There are now more studies that are starting to look at the benefits of playing games.

"These include things like collaborative skills and problem solving – all of these things are hugely advantageous.

"I have spent 20 years talking to my son about whether he is wasting time playing video games. I am convinced his generation are socialised and collaborative in a way that far exceeds my generation – I am 57."

With games such as the hugely popular Grand Theft Auto series frequently making headlines for depictions of violence, many

parents and grandparents struggle to see past the more adult-focused games.

But the video game industry has developed into a hugely diverse marketplace offering a host of various options. Just to give an indication of the scale of gaming's success, the latest GTA game, its fifth incarnation, has sold more than 50 million copies across all platforms globally.

Harnessing fast broadband has allowed a booming online gaming environment, which now means youngsters often play alone but linking to friends or others around the world.

Chartered psychologist and member of the British Psychological Society Helen O'Connor says: "For many years computer games have been studied and the negative aspects of playing these have been highlighted to parents and children, but rarely have studies looked at the benefits of computer games.

"We are now looking at how times are changing and how young people's interests need to be both monitored but embraced."

Adds Kate Kneale: "I think there are two things that are important to discuss.

"One is the idea that we lump all video games together. As fantasy author Ian Livingstone says, if the only film you had ever watched was Texas Chainsaw Massacre,



BLAST: GTA V, left, may be violent and rated 18, but it would be wrong to assume all games have such content

none of the rest of us would have ever been allowed to watch Snow White or any other movies.

"So that needs unpicking – to take 40 years of creative video games and categorise them all together as being violent is extremely unhelpful."

But it continues to concern teachers – many of whom are only too aware of the perils of young children being allowed to play and be exposed to adult content.

John Walder is the secretary for the Kent division for the National

Union of Teachers. He says: "I can see that some kids might learn dexterity skills from playing these kind of games – hand eye coordination, and that type of thing.

"However, some of the content looks horrible, though that is not different to a lot of films. In the same way you wouldn't want a child to watch particularly violent or graphic films, you wouldn't want them exposed to this content.

"I think that children can learn some skills playing these games

though, there are good and bad aspects. If the content could be adjusted, the positive could outweigh the negative.

"But in terms of games that contain violence, including sexual violence, I can't approve of that."

The problem with the graphic content in some games, according to Simon Perry, a computer games tester from Welling, is that some people assume a correlation of game violence to real life violence.

"If you look at something like

GTA, the content is linked with behaviour that would be considered very wrong," he says.

"But the mistake people have made is thinking that doing something in a game means you are going to do it, or are significantly more likely to do it, in real life. I enjoy GTA, but I can honestly say I don't want to go out on a crime spree.

"It's escapism – but more than that, unlike watching television, you are actually exercising certain skills like spatial awareness. People are now starting to think the skills gamers have observing dangers on a screen could possibly make them better drivers."

According to Mr Perry, it's not just a question of whether you should or shouldn't play.

"It's important to think about how long you spend playing," he explains. "You hear about people, including young people, suffering from problems like deep vein thrombosis after sitting and playing for hours. Obesity is another factor in the argument against gaming, due to being sedentary while playing, but I think this is about moderating game-use, rather than thinking all games are bad."

A recent study by Oxford University suggests there is some truth to this. According to a spokesman: "Enjoying gaming for less than an hour a day can make children more satisfied with their lives than those who do not play video games at all.

"However, the findings also indicated that young people are likely to have lower satisfaction levels if they spend more than three hours a day taking part in this activity."

So how do schools deal with chil-

dren's and young people's interest in gaming? Should they be strict in outlining what games pupils can and can't play? Some establishments think providing alternative activities, as well as a degree of trust, is the best policy.

And that includes remembering that video games are not simply confined to the major games consoles – but on phones and tablets too.

Benenden School is a boarding school in Cranbrook, for girls aged 11-18.

Headmistress Samantha Price says: "Like most schools, we limit the girls' mobile phone use but we do not have a specific policy on video games because it has never been an issue at Benenden.

"Video games do not form a significant part of the girls' leisure time activities as they have such a broad range of other things they like to do here.

"We trust our students to use their spare time constructively and they know that we will intervene if anything is impacting negatively on their learning.

"We also invest considerable time educating them in e-technology so they can fully benefit from the opportunities of new technology as well as being aware of their responsibilities and how to keep themselves safe."

■ What do you think? Are video games disrupting young people or simply a harmless leisure pursuit? Share your views and experience and join the debate. Write to: The Editor, KoS, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford TN23 1PP. Or email us at editorial@kosmedia.co.uk.

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Our top seaside towns where the house prices are really rocketing

By Jamie Weir

jamie.weir@archant.co.uk

HOMEOWNERS in coastal locations are cashing in as house prices rocket.

Research from property group Savills highlighted coastal locations in the south of England which saw the greatest returns on property over the past decade.

Examining areas not known as property hotspots - so ruling out the likes of Whitstable or Brighton - two of the top 10 locations were in Kent; Deal and Ramsgate.

The property group examined places which had an average sale price in 2014 of under £250,000. From that list, Savills found the places which had seen the biggest change in average sale price over the previous 10 years.

A home in Deal in 2004 would have set the average buyer back just £166,241. In 2014, that rose to £227,423 - a rise of 36.8 per cent.

Sophie Chick, the research analyst at Savills who wrote the report said: "Across all seaside locations in England and Wales, the average ten year price increase was 28 per cent, so Kent coastal locations have per-

TOP 10 HOUSE PRICE RISES:

POS.	Town (district)	Av price 2004	Av price 2014	Change
1.	Portslade (Brighton)	172,814	249,283	44.2%
2.	Southend-on-Sea (Essex)	172,430	241,850	40.3%
3.	Cowes (Isle of Wight)	175,016	240,424	37.4%
4.	Deal (Kent)	166,241	227,423	36.8%
5.	Millbrook (Cornwall)	146,214	197,352	35%
6.	Hastings (East Sussex)	142,334	191,573	34.6%
7.	Ramsgate (Kent)	130,163	175,005	34.5%
8.	Havant (Hampshire)	165,943	221,758	33.6%
9.	Peacehaven (East Sussex)	173,208	229,423	32.5%
10.	Exmouth (Devon)	181,832	239,726	31.8%

formed well in comparison.

"As popular retreats such as Salcombe in Devon become more unaffordable - with an average house price of £658,330 - Kent is becoming 'the talked about region' for seaside living, with Deal and Ramsgate leading the next wave of British coastal towns.

"These sleepy seaside spots can be rejuvenated by groups of like-minded people moving to the area. As classic coastal locations become unaffordable for many people, Kent offers good value and house price rises show the area is in the first phase of taking off."

Many point to the link to the high-

speed rail network as a key contributing factor.

It takes just 80 minutes to get to central London from the coastal town allowing many commuters to work in the capital and live by the sea.

Chris Jones is a commuter who lives in Deal. He said: "I doubt I would be able to live here, while working in London without the high speed link.

"It definitely feels like an up and coming place, and you can see it in the range of shops which we now have in the town. We were voted top high street in the UK in a national newspaper recently, and have had

loads of new businesses opening, unlike many high streets up and down the country which have been seeing businesses desert them."

That's a view which is echoed by Toby Caufield, a director at local estate agents Colebrook Sturrock.

Mr Caufield said: "People are now more likely to be able to work from home once or twice a week, and that has meant that there are a number of people who are able to get a London weighted salary, without necessarily having to be there every day. Coastal properties have always been popular, but the flexibility to work away from the office has meant that more people

are able to actually live day to day in them.

"In my view both Ramsgate and Deal have historically been undervalued, so this rise in prices may also be the market getting back to some sort of parity."

Ramsgate has even greater potential to climb, with average house prices still relatively low at £175,005 in 2014. Even so, they've shot up from £130,163 over the last 10 years, a rise of just under 35 per cent.

Richard Styles, the town clerk for Ramsgate Town Council told KoS: "In Ramsgate there has been a view that the area had been left to stagnate in the past as part of the coastal 'rust-belt'. Now though, the area seems to be shaking that image off, with government support to help regenerate the area, and more people moving in to take advantage of lower house prices."

South Thanet's new MP, Conservative Craig Mackinlay, says that the area will keep on prospering.

He said: "Ramsgate's been called the Monaco of the south east due to the beautiful marina, as well as the more relaxed pace of life, which has proved a magnet for Londoners who want to keep the city within easy reach, but not live in it."



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PAST: Investigations unit editor David Powles speaks to a man who worked for many years for those firms that sold the bad blood

'I worked for firms which sold contaminated blood'

In one of the worst medical scandals in modern history, thousands found themselves infected after being injected with contaminated blood approved by the NHS. Now, they still seek justice. In the latest of a series of special reports, we meet a man who worked for one of the companies selling the blood



By David Powles

additional reporting: Chris Britcher
chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

"I WANT to give the other side to the story". So said an email sent in the aftermath of our recent investigation into the continued problems plaguing contaminated blood scandal victims from the 1970s and 80s.

For while the government had been given full right-to-reply to the many accusations laid at their door following our probe, what had been impossible to source was the take from those people at the very heart of the story - the drug companies who supplied the contaminated blood products.

During the period in question, several companies were tasked with the job of purchasing and importing blood plasma products, which was then put through a process which separated each usable element before being sold to NHS organisations in this country. These organisations would then use the products to treat the sick.

What is now known is that some of those blood products were contaminated, carrying infections such as hepatitis C and even HIV, which in many cases were subsequently passed on to the person being treated. Many have died this way, many more have suffered years of sickness.

Decades on, it is still claimed more should have been done to stop the so-called 'bad blood' from being used. Some of it, for instance, was sourced from prisoners, the homeless and prostitutes in the United States, people who were at a high-risk of carrying infections.

What is worse, is the accusation from many victims and expert cam-

" There was no cover up. A lot of this was down to ignorance. There was nothing malicious... "

'Keith',
who worked selling blood products during the 1990s

paigned that as far as some people are concerned this was more than a simple accident or medical failure. It is claimed that certain people within the health industry knew of the risks of contamination yet, whether through financial or other reasons, did little about it.

This is one of the accusations that Keith (not his real name) is keen to discuss. Keith previously worked as a senior sales manager for the south, which included Kent, for one of the major players in the blood

product sector. One that has faced much scrutiny and criticism over the issue.

His job was to manage a sales team for a large part of the country, which would sell the blood products to hospitals and other NHS organisations.

Although his time of employment, for much of the 1990s, came shortly after the height of the scandal and at a time when safety had been improved, he witnessed much of its aftermath and worked with those around at the time.

We meet for coffee in a quiet train station cafe. The small talk is kept to a minimum as it's clear he is a man determined to get his point across.

He told me: "Speaking from within the industry I can categorically say there was no cover up. A lot of this was down to ignorance. No, more a lack of knowledge. There was nothing malicious or malevolent about the contamination.

"There were no shortcuts taken or any attempts to avoid admission. Two factual things that don't weigh

WHERE WE ARE AT

VICTIMS and their families are awaiting the next move from the government in their long-running quest for what they would consider some form justice for the scandal.

One of the key findings of our investigation was the many ways in which the compensation system set up for those affected remains flawed many decades on.

As well as the being regarded as over-complicated and demeaning, there are many inconsistencies as to who receives what.

Campaigners are calling for a blanket one-off payment, as well as improved continued support.

Prior to May's general election, David Cameron issued an apology to victims, as well as a pledge for an extra £25m in support funding.

Mr Cameron has recently promised that further details will be released before parliament's summer recess as to exactly where that money will be spent.

Unfortunately there has been no U-turn in a decision to delay the release of a breakthrough drug called Sofosbuvir.

It was approved by drugs regulator NICE in January as a potentially effective drug to rid sufferers of hepatitis C.

However its planned roll-out, originally agreed to start in April, has been delayed by NHS England until August.

The government, meanwhile, has ruled out conducting its own public inquiry into the scandal.

up with those claims; the HIV virus was not commonly known about until the 1980s.

"It was a completely new entity, so how can you look for something that you don't know exists?

"Hep C and Hep A were known about, but I don't think the long term

Continues on page 20

SUPPORT GROUP'S NEW REPORT

SINCE our investigation, campaign group Tainted Blood has issued a fresh report which it claims adds weight to their claims that many questions remain unanswered about the scandal.

The 24-page report, titled 'First, Do No Harm', uses publicly-available documents to highlight some of the warnings and concerns that were raised about the safety of blood and blood products, long before measures were introduced in the mid 1980s to improve safety.

The first, a letter from the Stanford University Medical Center, to the Blood Products Laboratory, shows how concerns were raised about the potential for imported blood products to be contaminated as early as 1975.

Campaigners claim that if Britain had acted on those early indications and warnings, hundreds of lives would have been saved.



FIGHTING:
The triple-ribbon of Tainted Blood

They also argue governments at the time took the cheaper option of importing blood and blood products, many of which turned out to be contaminated, rather than put investment into setting up a safe and self-sustaining blood system within the United Kingdom. The group continues to call for an independent inquiry to determine how and why these decisions were made and who was behind them.

Continued from Page 19

effects were known."

I put to him evidence raised at a 2009 Lord Archer inquiry into the scandal which showed there were levels of knowledge and warnings within the NHS of the risks the products were carrying. His reply: "Not where I worked. They didn't know."

He added: "You have to remember that at the time there were no other options. You could let people die or treat them. It might not have been perfect but there was no other choice. Any medical procedure comes with dangers."

It's easy to imagine in scandals like these hordes of faceless, cold and uncaring scientists carrying out dodgy practices under the cover of darkness, something which Keith is keen to get across is far from the truth.

He explained: "I did work with people who were around when the contaminated blood was passed on and they thought it was a terrible thing. But they did it without knowing about it and as soon as they found out, it was rectified."

"They understood the enormity of being a victim of contamination and everyone felt sorry for them."

"The people most affected by it were the scientists. They did try their best to keep up with all the latest technologies but if you don't know about something how can you do anything about it?"

In the aftermath of the scandal Keith says that he and fellow workers would often be verbally abused by people who blamed them for what happened.

And years on he fears there is still a



feeling amongst the public that the problems of contaminated blood persist, something he wants to dispel.

He said: "I did come up against it on a daily basis. You would walk into a blood bank or hospital and they would ask you about it, to test your knowledge."

"The reaction from people varied widely from acceptance to personal hatred, even though it had been nothing to do with me and wasn't happening any-

more."

One of the issues facing victims and their families centres upon levels of compensation, with many feeling they have not been properly recompensed for something that wasn't their fault and something that should have been stopped by the government.

However, Keith was passionate in his views on that subject as well, adding: "How should you compensate somebody

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Special Report: Blood contamination scandal...Special Report: Blood contamination scandal

CASE STUDY #1: 'NOTHING CAN BRING BACK MY DEAD HUSBAND'

TO understand the full reach of the terrible tentacles of this disgraceful tragedy, you need only look as far as Clair Walton.

The 53-year-old was, until her early 20s, a normal, healthy woman – embarking on a relationship with her husband Bryan.

But little could the couple know, when they married in May 1983, that a little more than a decade later one would be dead and the other infected with an incurable disease.

Bryan Walton had severe haemophilia. And like so many others like him, was treated with Factor VIII – a product sourced from a variety of blood donors which allowed haemophiliacs to inject it into them to let their blood clot and

prevent non-stop bleeding.

But what they were not to know was that it was infected with HIV, the virus that leads to AIDS.

Just two years after they had married, he was called in for blood tests and diagnosed with an illness which was causing near panic across the land as it arrived and changed forever sexual behaviour.

Mrs Walton was called in too, and was also found to have the illness.

"We just went into a numbness," she explained to KoS this week, "and batted down the hatches."

"This was 1985, the peak of the fear. We just shut up and kept quiet. You couldn't mention it. People today struggle to understand the horror of it all back then. But people were

getting their homes vandalised if people found out."

Around three quarters of those who were infected with HIV as a result of the scandal, have now died. Little over 350 survive.

But her main fury today – and one shared by many in her position – is the manner in which the Government handle payments to those whose lives were forever changed and their health forever destroyed by being given contaminated blood, despite the warnings.

In particular her anger is directed at the MacFarlane Trust, set up in 1988 by the Government to support people with haemophilia who were infected with HIV as a result of contaminated NHS blood products,

and their spouses, parents, children and dependants.

A registered charity, it is solely funded by the Department of Health.

She explains: "If you have an accident at work and it's not your fault you seek compensation and get a payment.

"You don't go to a charity with your begging bowl. You get a settlement – a sum of money and a pension so we know we don't have to worry for the rest of our lives.

"We are having to take medication for an incurable illness for the rest of our lives – the treatment improvement is great, but we don't want to be in this position.

"Nothing can bring back my dead husband, or the years of suffering he

endured from ill health, nor restore the years of damage to me socially, psychologically and physically, or give me the children I was denied – but there are things that can be done.

"We recently had an apology for contaminated blood from the PM and a promise that things will be looked into. This provision of an adequate financial package which includes a lump sum and pension needs to be done swiftly for those who are infected and on limited lives – not drawn out by a long inquiry or individual assessments to determine loss. It's not difficult. We have some dedicated and decent MPs who are fighting for us – I am grateful for that."

DISEASED: Patients had no idea of the risks

for something like this? My mother died through a medical mistake – should I be compensated? Should we compensate for everything that doesn't go right?

"There's always a risk and at the end of the day what other choice did they have if they needed medical treatment?"

But he admits he can 'understand' and 'appreciate' why, years on, those affected would feel passionately about their cause in light of the fact compensation has been, in the government's own words, flawed and no-one has ever been made accountable for a saga that has ruined so many lives.

CASE STUDY #2: 'THEY KNEW ABOUT THE RISKS'

BARBARA Botting's son was born in November 1982. With no history of haemophilia in the family, the diagnosis when he was six months old was a surprise.

He received Factor VIII and was infected with hepatitis C.

She remains furious that warnings about the possible risks of contaminated blood were ignored.

"What annoys me so much is they knew about the risks in May 1983. So if they had taken it off the shelves then he would have not have been infected.

"Until he was diagnosed when he was 16 blood contamination was never mentioned. I spent years covered in his blood and no-one ever told me to be extra careful

around him or ever told me to get checked."

Hepatitis C is spread through blood-to-blood contact.

Her son received a one-off £20,000 payment several years ago.

She adds: "All the people treated should be treated the same and get the same payment."

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Cost of 'suspicious' blaze in town centre set to topple millions

By Chris Murphy
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

AS INVESTIGATORS continue to establish the cause of a major fire in the centre of Maidstone town centre, traders are counting the cost of a week of enormous disruption.

Dozens of firefighters tackled the blaze at The Works bookstore in Week Street when emergency services were called just after 2am on Monday morning.

They had already been called out to tackle fires in five cars in two streets in the county town less than an hour before. Police are treating all as suspicious and haven't ruled out a link.

The fire gutted The Works and caused damage to surrounding buildings. A section of the street, between the entrance to Fremlin Walk and Gabriel's Hill was closed for much of the week.

As KoS went to press, scaffolding was being erected to help prevent any chance of falling masonry from the



CLOSED: A chunk of Maidstone's busiest shopping stretch was closed off

badly damaged shell which has been left behind.

Some estimates have put the cost of the blaze at several million pounds, when the damage is added to the cost of lost shopping hours for surrounding retailers.

Neighbouring stores like Marks & Spencer and those opposite like River Island have been badly hit as many of the 35,000 daily shoppers are kept away.

Maidstone Borough Council says it is painfully aware of the agony these stores have had to endure while access

to their doors has been restricted.

A spokesman said: "We, along with the emergency services and town centre management, are now focusing on the recovery phase and are planning to re-open Week Street as soon as possible by making safe the three worst fire damaged buildings.

"The shop fronts of all the buildings date back to the 1960s and might contain asbestos. Although the risk is negligible, hoardings will be erected as a precautionary measure to protect the public. It is hoped the work



will be completed by Monday at the latest."

A repair on the section of the street is likely to take at least a year.

Remains of The Works will need to be completely demolished, and there is still doubt about what will happen to the Hotter store and Thomson on the other side of street.

Remaining closed for now is Game, Monsoon, Dorothy Perkins/Burton, River Island, Cornish Kitchen, Boots Opticians, Thomson, The Works, Hotter, M&S Women's Fashion and Thorntons.

All week, a succession of experts from insurance companies, demolition firms and even architects have been pouring over what to do about the damage and calculate costings. As well as what can be seen from the street, the actual damage to buildings goes way back towards Rose Yard.

Amazingly, no one was hurt. Chief Supt Steve Corbishley said: "We are continuing to work closely with investigators from Kent Fire and Rescue Service to determine the exact cause of these incidents. We are also reviewing CCTV throughout parts of

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DEVASTATED: The remains of the fire-ravaged scene on Week Street

the town as part of our enquiries.

"Arson endangers people's lives, whether it's the owners of the property or staff.

"These incidents have had a tremendous impact on both residents and to traders, who have had property destroyed or have been unable to open businesses.

"We are working with other partners such as the local council to make sure that any businesses affected get the support they need.

"In the meantime parts of the town centre will remain closed so we can ensure everyone's safety. We are grateful for everyone's patience whilst the investigation continues."

Anyone with information should phone the police on 01732 379285, or call Kent Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.

■ A 21-year-old man was arrested on Thursday by police investigating the blaze. He remained in police custody as KoS went to press.



PROTECT: Scaffolding should be completed by Monday to protect the front of a stretch of the road hit by the fire



WRECKAGE: Fire crews spent hours tackling the fire which ripped apart The Works bookshop



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BACK: Original was one of the biggest grossing films of all time

Get ready for a return to when dinosaurs ruled

Chris Murphy takes a look at how cinemas are set to cash in on the release of Jurassic World

CINEMA bosses are bracing themselves for a bumper weekend as one of the summer's big blockbuster opens on screens across the county. Jurassic World whisks moviegoers back to the island first seen in the groundbreaking original, released back in 1993.

At the time, it became the biggest grossing movie of all time, and has made more than \$1bn (£650m).

Now the fourth film in the series – and the first since 2001 – may well go close to replicating that success.

The original Jurassic Park, based on the book by Michael Crichton, imagined scientists extracting dinosaur DNA from mosquitoes which had been caught in the sap of trees from the Jurassic era and then turned into amber.

Dinosaurs were then brought back to life only to run riot.

Jurassic World sees the island rejuvenated and now the major holiday destination originally intended.

And for cinemas, it should mean the tills keep ringing ahead of a host of big films this summer.

A spokesman for Vue at Westwood Cross in Broadstairs said: "This is a fantastic summer for blockbusters and film fans are in for a real treat."

"There's lots of excitement about the weekend's opening of Jurassic World. It's a film with stunning CGI and graphics, and our digital screens will really enhance the latest instalment in this iconic cinema franchise for our customers, bringing the creatures to life like never before."

"And that's not all, other big movies to look

out for include Fantastic Four, Terminator Genisys and Mission: Impossible – Rogue Nation, with Tom Cruise back for the fifth time in one of his most famous roles."

Other big movies this year will be Spectre, the new James Bond film, and the eagerly anticipated new Star Wars movie.

Mark Barlow, general manager for Showcase at Bluewater, said: "As predicted, the summer of 2015 is set to be an exciting season for cinema, with a huge array of blockbuster releases hitting the screens. The highly anticipated Jurassic World is just one."

However, taking a family to the cinema is no cheap option in this day and age.

Tickets for a family of four to witness Jurassic World in 3D will typically see you get little change out of £40.

Which is where some of the smaller screens will be hoping to cash in when the big movie comes to their venues.

A spokesman for the Trinity cinema and theatre in Tunbridge Wells said: "We are looking forward to showing Jurassic World. The special effects have moved on so much since the original."

The wheels of Jurassic World were originally put in motion back in 2004, but it struggled with a series of development problems which saw its original release date of 2005 delayed by a decade.

Steven Spielberg, director of the first two Jurassic Park films, returns as executive producer of the latest release – the same role he held for Jurassic Park 3.

Released by Universal Pictures, the movie was released on June 11 worldwide, with huge crowds expected for its first weekend.



FIGHT: Race for biggest movie of 2015 likely to be between this and new 007 and Star Wars flicks

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MP leads the charge for right to challenge unduly lenient court sentences

By Sarah Linney

sarah.linney@archant.co.uk

HOW would you feel if you'd been the victim of a crime, had the courage to take your aggressor to court, and seen them convicted – only to have the judge impose a lenient sentence?

Now Dartford's Tory MP Gareth Johnson is hoping to change that – by making it easier for people to challenge what many consider to be 'soft' sentences.

He wants the Government to give the prosecution the same rights of appeal against a sentence as are enjoyed by the defence – and secured a debate in the House of Commons this week on the subject.

"The defence can appeal against almost any sentence they believe is too harsh, but in most situations the prosecution cannot appeal against unduly lenient sentences," Mr Johnson said.

"There are a few crimes, such as manslaughter, rape and robbery, where you can appeal. But for the vast majority of offences, including burglary, malicious wounding, distributing child porn and child abuse, you can't do so.

"How is that balancing the scales of justice? It favours the criminal over the victim of crime and means there's less confidence in the system than there should be."

He cited the case of Stuart Kerner, the 44-year-old teacher from Aylesford, who had sex with one of his 16-year-old pupils at Bexleyheath Academy.

He was found guilty last December of sexual activity with a child by a person in a position of trust, but received a suspended jail term. The Attorney General's Office, which deals with appeals over undue leniency, received several complaints over the sentence.

"The parents of that pupil would be absolutely livid," Mr Johnson said.

"We owe it to the victims of crime to have a system where justice can prevail."

In cases where appeals over undue leniency are allowed, anyone can contact the Attorney General to ask for a rethink.

If the Attorney General feels the case merits it, it will be sent to the Court of Appeal for a decision. But if there's no substance to the claim, it won't progress.

Mr Johnson – whose 20-year legal career before he joined Parliament involved working as both a prosecution and defence lawyer and a legal advisor to magistrates – said he thought the number of cases affected by his proposals would be small.

"Most of the time, judges and magistrates



MP: Conservative Gareth Johnson

get it right," Mr Johnson said.

"The defence don't appeal every sentence, and we wouldn't see the prosecution doing so either – we're not seeing it happening in great quantities now with offences where the prosecution can appeal. It's got to be a sentence that is clearly wrong."

He admits that his proposal will cost millions of pounds, but says he thinks it is "money well spent".

"If we have a justice system that doesn't mete out justice, extra costs are incurred elsewhere," Mr Johnson added. "It can end up costing society more if people have no faith in the criminal justice system. People feel let down by the system and take the law into their own hands. This would be a wise investment."

The Prison Reform Trust, which aims to create a "just, humane and effective penal system", doesn't necessarily believe the plan is the right one. A spokesman said: "England and Wales have the highest imprisonment rate in western Europe and prison sentences are getting longer year on year.

"The mechanisms for referring cases to the Crown Prosecution Service where a person believes an unduly lenient sentence has been awarded already cover an extensive number of offences.

"We would like to see more restorative sentencing options for the courts, to enable offenders to make amends and take responsibility for their actions. Such sentences are proven to be effective in reducing reoffending and increasing victim satisfaction in the justice system."



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Just one in four speed cameras can catch you at any given time

Probe discovers three out of every four camera casings in Kent are not operational. **Maria Chiorando** and **David Powles** examine the latest exclusive figures on just where the top 10 speeding spots are



EXCLUSIVE figures obtained by Kent on Sunday paint a fascinating map of the county's speeding hotspots and the cameras where most drivers get snapped.

And it may come as little surprise to many to see the Dartford Crossing approach topped the list for the year 2014-15, with a massive 4,663 speeding notices issued (see list).

But what perhaps will shock many is that just one in four of the bright yellow camera casings on our roads are actually armed with a working camera, with the devices circulated around the county as police see fit.

Anne-Marie Penny is the partnership project manager for Kent and Medway Safety Cameras - a partnership made up of Medway Council, Kent County Council, Kent Police and Highways England. The partnership was formed in July 2002 and aims to influence, educate and encourage motorists to slow down and stay within the speed limit, in order to prevent accidents.

She says: "In this county, there are 56 mobile camera locations, 79 fixed camera locations and the ratio of cam-

eras to their housings is one to four.

"We choose specific areas to house them, depending on the number of fatalities or injuries in that area, and driver behaviour. We move the cameras around, and work with the resources we have. While you can find information about where the housings are, we don't publish where the cameras are.

"With the mobile cameras it's obvious, because the vans just roll up."

This goes some way to explaining why the number of fines issued in a specific location can change, as according to Ms Penny, a camera will be moved from a location where it is not deemed necessary.

For some, cameras are little more than a cash cow.

The Association of British Drivers (ABD) is an independent organisation. It aims to represent the interests of private motorists in the United Kingdom.

According to a spokesman: "The excessive reliance on speed cameras in the UK over the last two decades has affected road safety adversely. A massive diversion of resources towards speed enforcement and away from more cost-effective alternatives has regrettably resulted.

"This process has primarily been driven - and supported - by the financial interests of the equipment manufacturers and of the safety camera partnerships, rather than by concerns for improvement in UK road safety."

According to Ms Penny, this is not the case. She says: "We don't get any money back from fines. This all goes back to the Treasury. We provide support to policing officers. We are focused on areas where we have seen the most injuries and casualties.

"Our remit is to reduce deaths on the roads. Kent has a relatively small number of cameras, and I like that. We have put them where people are getting killed or injured."

According to the partnership, overall, crashes and casualties have seen a reduction across the county - but there remain concerns over the deployment of the controversial cameras.

Professor Stephen Glaister, director of the RAC Foundation, said: "The UK risks breaking apart in terms of road safety policy with different administrations having varying levels of power, funding and political will to deal with death and injury on the highways.

"Overall, many fewer people were killed and injured on the roads at the end of the last Westminster parliament than at the beginning. But given the flattening out of casualty figures, a probable increase in casualties in 2014 and a predicted increase in road traffic, it is important that national, regional and local governments review these trends, and share best practice to learn what is, and what isn't, working around."

Ms Penny added: "We could make this more of a cash cow if we wanted,



CROWDED: Our roads are busy but still too many of us are speeding

with cameras on every corner, but that's not how we operate. For those who think it's just about making money, if you don't want to contribute, then don't break the law by speeding."

Now traffic bosses are offering alternatives to traditional punishments. In line with the spike and then dip of people caught speeding, there has been a change in the number of people attending speed awareness courses in the county. Courses in Kent are available at Dartford, Rainham, Aylesford, Canterbury and Maidstone.

These courses are offered as an alternative to points and a fine, when drivers are caught speeding within

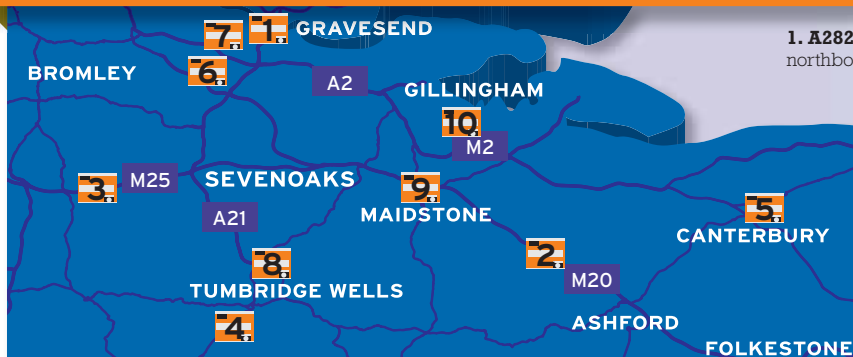
certain limits. Drivers pay a fee for the course (£87 in Kent), which lasts for half a day, and aims to educate motorists on the dangerous driving.

According to Ms Penny: "They can then make the decision on whether to pay the fine and accept the points, take the course, or go to court.

"Most people do take advantage of the opportunity to take the course, seeing it as the lesser of three evils, and we get very positive feedback. Generally people do not want to go but they get a lot out of it.

"It's not punishment, but more about recognising that people drive as a matter of course, safely."

Top ten speed cameras in Kent - Camera location and number of speed offences



1. A282 Dartford Tunnel Approach, northbound towards Essex, Dartford
4663 offences

6. Birchwood Road, Wilmington. Between Summerhouse Drive and Ladenhouse Lane.
1325 offences

2. M20 Coastbound/ London Bound
Junctions 4-7 (there are three)
4077 offences

7. A225 Hawley Road, nr Shirehall Road, Dartford
1219 offences

8. A26 Eridge Road, on the A26 south of Tunbridge Wells just inside the Kent border. Facing south.
1189 offences

3. M25 Anti-Clockwise Clackett Lane Services to Junction 5-4310B
2586 offences

9. A229 Maidstone Road, A229 Maidstone Road, the dual carriageway leading towards Chatham / Rochester from the Bridgewood roundabout. Chatham
1118 offences

4. A267 top of Frant Road, approaching Tunbridge Wells, just before Clarendon Way.
2368 offences

10. A249 Sittingbourne Road/ Detling Hill. Camera is located immediately as you come down through the 'S' bends at the bottom of Detling Hill.
1101 offences

5. A28 Pin Hill, Canterbury. On the Canterbury ring road between the Rhodas Town roundabout and the Wincheap roundabout.
1968 offences



Financial year Courses attended and completed

2012/13	27,090
2013/14	34,559
2014/15	23,469

Kent Police receives a portion of the fee paid by drivers attending speed awareness courses. The total amount received by Kent Police in the specified years can be found within the following table:

Financial year	Amount (£)
2012/13	1,044,980
2013/14	1,042,130
2014/15	1,096,260

According to a spokesman: "It is important to note that the amounts received from speed awareness courses per financial year do not directly correspond with the number of individuals who attended and completed courses per financial year.

"This is because courses may be completed up to five months after the date of the offence."

SPEED AWARENESS COURSE INFORMATION

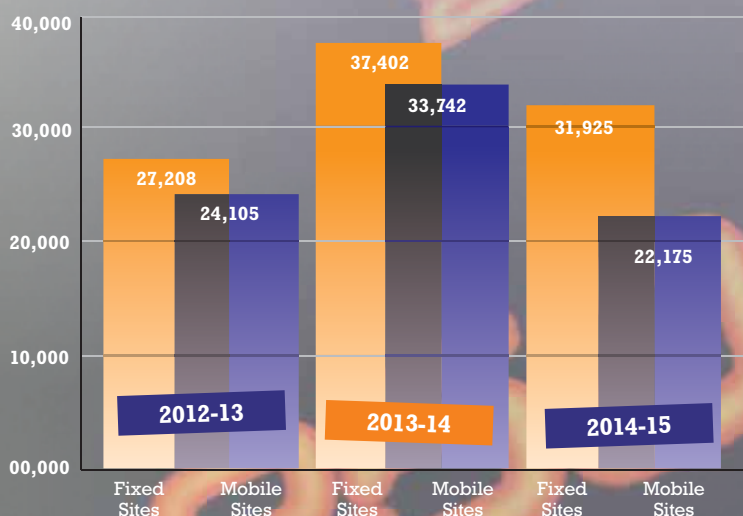
PAYMENTS RECEIVED FOR CAMERA SPEEDING OFFENCES

FINANCIAL YEAR	NUMBER OF PAYMENTS RECEIVED
2012/13	16,957
2013/14	23,362
2014/15*	14,788

FINANCIAL YEAR	AMOUNT
2012/13	£1,017,420
2013/14	£1,914,280
2014/15*	£1,478,800

*2014/15 data is liable to change due to offences still being processed.

Number of speeding notices issued from fixed cameras (by location) and mobile cameras (total)



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The Staplehurst rail crash that haunted literary genius Dickens

June 9 marked the 150th anniversary of the horrific accident that successful Victorian writer Charles Dickens was involved in. **Molly Kersey** examines the effect that it had on his life and his work....

WIDELY regarded as one of the greatest novelists of the Victorian era, Charles Dickens created iconic fictional characters such as Oliver Twist and Scrooge, leaving a legacy that is honoured to this day.

But the literary legend very nearly became an accident statistic when the train he was on derailed while crossing a viaduct in Staplehurst.

Dickens had been travelling from Folkestone to London, returning from a holiday in France, when the thirteen-car train broke in two as the engine jumped the rails.

The writer and his companions survived, but 10 people were killed and more than 40 were injured.

And this week marked the 150th anniversary of the disaster – the hor-

“For Dickens the after effects lasted really for the remainder of his life. The experience haunted him.”

Catherine Waters,
Professor at the University of Kent

ror of which never truly left Dickens. “For Dickens the after effects lasted really for the remainder of his life,” said Catherine Waters, professor of Victorian literature and print culture at the University of Kent.

“He died on the same day – June 9 1870 – five years to the day.

“Over that period he suffered flashbacks, it preyed on his nerves.

“He was always thereafter nervous travelling by rail.

“The experience haunted him.

“He wrote a dark short story called The Signalman that captures some of the trauma that the accident was for him. The main effect on print culture would have to be how Dickens then digested the experience and assimilated it into his own writing.”

The accident was caused because, unbeknown to the train driver, routine repair work was being carried out to replace the wooden timbers, known as baulks, that anchored the rails on top of the piers and girders that made up one of the viaducts to the east of Staplehurst station.

Similar to modern times, these repairs were meant to take place during intervals between passenger services to avoid delays.

Fog detonators were also supposed to be placed at intervals for a distance of up to 1,000 yards, but due to it being a sunny day the foreman had not put these out.



HAUNTED: After the rail crash Dickens was nervous about travelling by train and reportedly suffered flashbacks.

Catastrophically, the wrong timetable had also been consulted, so when Dickens' 3.11pm train passed through Headcorn, it was impossible for the driver to stop in time.

Dickens later reported: “I was in the carriage that did not go over, but was caught on the turn among the ruins of the bridge, and stood alone – the engine broken from it, before – the train gone down into the valley behind.

“I am shaken, not by the dragging of the carriage itself, but by the work afterwards in getting out the dead

and dying, which was horrible.”

Incidents like this were, unfortunately, not uncommon at the time.

“I think this accident gets particular notice because Dickens was involved in it, but it was one of many,” explained Professor Waters.

“I think the articles I was looking at when I was writing were speaking of this as being the third accident within the space of two weeks that they were writing on.

“The technology was expanding all the time. Then, as now, there was pressure on the rail companies to

keep to schedule and run as many times as possible and as fast as possible.

“Safety improvements were being made all the time, but there were a number of accidents.”

So what work of the literary legend would we have lost, if he had become an accident statistic on that fateful day?

“We would have lost the remainder of Our Mutual Friend,” said Professor Waters.

“He had it with him in the railway carriage. He was publishing it in

many parts.”

In a postscript to the novel, which focuses on the working class Boffins and their inheritance of funds after a death, Dickens describes a similar accident, blurring the lines between the events inside and outside of the novel.

“We would have lost the finished portion of The Mystery of Edwin Drood – his final novel that was incomplete at the time of his death.

“We would have also lost quite a lot of journalism, as well as letters.”

Dickens had been travelling with Ellen Ternan, the actress he left his wife Catherine for, and her mother.

After the accident, he freed himself from their suspended carriage, got a key from one of the guards and rescued them both.

He later climbed back in to get his brandy-flask, and helped to relieve other survivors.

Little is known about the impact that this traumatic event had on Ms Ternan's life afterwards, although she was not injured.

“There are coded references to her in letters after the event, where he talks about her as ‘the patient’, which seems to imply that she was clearly unsettled and disturbed by the accident,” said Professor Waters.

Rail travel impacted many lives and was something of an adjustment for those who were used to a more traditional way of living, travelling by horse rather than at higher speeds along the tracks.

“Not everyone could adjust to the change that rail travel brought.

“Some people write nostalgically of the days of stage coaches,” said Professor Waters.

“It's a complete transformation really. If you had been travelling on a stage coach, to go to being propelled at 50 miles per hour must have been incredible.

“People talk about what it was like looking out of the rail carriage window and the scenery flashing past.

“It facilitated all sorts of developments. You could travel that much more quickly and for a reasonable price.”

Dickens had travelled extensively by rail before the accident, and this experience featured in some of his work – including short story A Flight.

“He writes very memorable essays about travelling to France on the train and this effect of suddenly being shot through a tunnel and emerging on the other side, and what that's like,” said Professor Waters.

“When you read it, it's like a film of old rail travel, you kind of go with him. He is such a great writer.”

■ A conference will be held at the University of Kent to mark the anniversary on June 25 to 27. For details visit www.kent.ac.uk/english.

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VIEWS: Bodiam, in East Sussex, above



VIEWS: Kent offers the ideal landscape to enjoy and relax in

Clear your mind and open your eyes to our glorious countryside

Sarah Linney speaks to an author who has compiled a compendium of walks around the county

WITH the summer now settling in for the next few months, it's hard not to want to take in the fresh air and explore our picturesque county.

After all, pulling on your walking boots and packing a picnic can provide some of the best value entertainment for families, couples or even on your own.

And a new book by Aylesford author Michael Easterbrook aims to help those who love to explore the county's beautiful rural areas on foot discover yet more delights – at any time of year.

Kent Year Round Walks features 20 circular routes around the county's countryside, divided into the four seasons in which they are each best appreciated.

"A lot of people tend to go out in summer when the weather's nice," Mr Easterbrook explained.

"But quite often you can see things like houses and historical features in winter and autumn that you wouldn't see when the trees are in leaf.

"In autumn you get some lovely weather, too, as well as the autumn colours

"You still get wonderful views of the coast at any time of year, and a lot of the best birds are around in the winter as they come down from further north."

Alongside a description of the route, Mr Easterbrook provides notes of seasonal things to look out for – butterflies and orchards filled with blossom in spring, orchids in summer, and flocks of bird

and berries in the winter.

"I tried to pick out things like historic houses, castles and windmills," he said.

"You could do all the walks at any time of year and see different things in the countryside."

One of his favourite routes is the first walk in the book – a climb up from Otford, near Sevenoaks, to the top of the North Downs.

However, when we asked him to pick a favourite, it was clear that he loves every single one of the routes in the book.

"The walk from Otford starts with quite a steep climb – you need to be reasonably fit – but you get fantastic views over the Darent Valley and there are lots of flowers to see," Mr Easterbrook said.

"On the walk from Ightham Mote you can also see various wildflowers, including the bluebells in the woods.

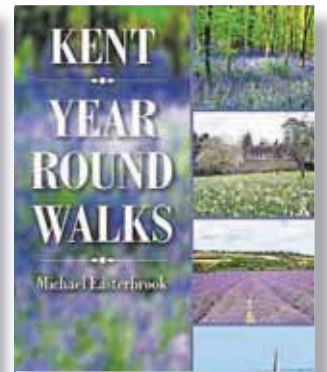
"Around the Alkham Valley is fantastic – lovely, undulating downland with little villages and ancient churches. Here I stumbled across St Radigund's Abbey, which is now a house, but you can still see some of the features, like the gatehouse.

"Chilham is possibly Kent's most beautiful village, with its black and white timbered buildings – it's featured in quite a lot of TV programmes. And at Sandhurst Cross, on the border with Sussex, you have a wonderful view over Bodiam Castle. You very suddenly come across it, and find yourself looking down over a vineyard at a fairytale castle.

Originally from Wolverhampton, Mr Easterbrook, 66, has lived in Kent for more than 40 years.



TOUR: Mote Park above, and the cover of Michael Easterbrook's book detailing trips around our county



A former research scientist at the East Malling Research Station, he is now retired, and has three children and two grandchildren.

However, he still works in a voluntary capacity as the butterfly recorder for Kent for Butterfly Conservation, a charity dedicated to the conservation of butterflies, moths and their habitats across the UK.

The role involves keeping records of butterflies seen in the county and sending them to the charity's national office so they can monitor changes in butterfly populations.

He is also a prolific author, having already published numerous guides to walking in Kent and several books on butterflies in Britain and Europe.

And he still likes to go for a good long walk – many of the routes in the book are between four and six miles long – at least once a week.

"Walking is one of the best forms of

exercise. More and more studies show how good it is for mental health," he said. "When I was working, if I felt stressed, a walk on the Downs had a very good effect.

"If you walk steadily at a reasonable pace over a reasonable distance – say two or three miles – it can be better for you than more rapid exercise."

And he says it's important to appreciate the beautiful countryside that lies on our doorstep.

"Kent is underrated," Mr Easterbrook said. "The nature reserve in Lydden is one of the best places for butterflies in the British Isles. Two or three rare species, such as the Adonis blue and the silver spotted skipper, can be seen there.

"There are parts of the county that are quite built up, but there are still some wonderful areas on the Downs, for example in Wye and Chilham, and villages a long way from the motor-

ways. There are still lots of hidden corners."

Kent Year Round Walks is published by Countryside Books at £7.95. For more information, visit www.countrysidebooks.co.uk.

If you go out for a walk around the county, why not grab some of your favourite scenes and send it into us to share with our thousands of readers?

Each week we publish a photograph in our Images of Kent section which we run alongside our popular letters section.

So next time you take a stroll and spot a picturesque site why not grab a photograph on your phone or camera and email it into us? You'll get to see your picture in print, alongside your name.

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6, 27 November, 8, 29 January, 5, 12, 19, 26 February, 4, 18, 25 March, (usually £5,530.00)

Additional day guests charged at £63pp, additional evening guests charged at £17.50pp

Saturdays - £4,935.00 - available on: 8, 15, August, 26, September, (usually £6,580.00)

24 October, 7, 14, November, 16, 23, 30 January, 6, 13, 20, 27 February, 5, 12, 19, 26 March (usually £5,810.00)

Additional day guests charged at £66pp, additional evening guests charged at £17.50pp

Sundays - £3,112.50 - available on: 9, 23, August, 13, 27, September, (usually £4,150.00)

4, October, 1, 8, 15, 22, November, 10, 17, 24, 31 January, 7, 14, 21, 28 February, 6, 13, 27 March (usually £3,600.00)

Additional day guests charged at £58pp, additional evening guests charged at £17.50pp.

All dates subject to availability at time of enquiry



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2nd October

MC - James Redmond - As seen on Emmerdale, Coronation Street, Hollyoaks, Holby City, **Opener - Phil Reid** - 2014 Jokers joker of the year, **Middle - Keith Platt, Headliner 1 - Adam Kay** - Known for the London Underground Song & Creator of BBC3 show Crims, **Headliner 2 - Andrew Lawrence** - As seen on Stand up of the Week, Live at the Apollo, Michael McIntyre's Comedy Roadshow, Dave's One night stand

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Enjoy a 3 course meal then join the coolest cats in town as they rekindle the magic of Frank & Dean. **£29.95 per person**

24th July - Return to the 90's!

Relive the naughties with all your favourite hits performed by all girl band The Strawberries. Meal, live entertainment and disco at **£29.95 per person**

14th August - Blues Brothers Tribute Evening

Grab your dancing shoes and join the party for this high energy show. The ticket price includes entertainment, disco and a delicious 3 course meal. **£29.95 per person**

5th & 26th August - I am - 3pm Summer Time Party!

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FRIENDSHIP: Mayor of Ashford meets personnel from the British Army's Intelligence Corps on the streets of Ashford town centre on a sunny afternoon last weekend

Crowds celebrate town's historic link with the Intelligence Corps

Big crowds turned up to cheer on a very special parade through the streets of Ashford last weekend

HUNDREDS of well-wishers turned out onto the streets of Ashford last weekend to mark the town's long association with the British Army.

Officers, soldiers and veterans of the Intelligence Corps, which for more than 20 years were based at the town's Templer Barracks, paraded through the streets last Sunday in warm sunshine and to the delight of the cheering crowds.

The Intelligence Corps were exercising the rights granted it under its honorary freedom of the borough.

The distinction was first bestowed on the Corps in May 1979 in order to "perpetuate the close bonds of friendship and mutual respect" with the borough.

This granted to the Corps the right, privilege and distinction of marching through the borough on all ceremonial occasions with bayonets fixed, drums beating and bands playing.

Templer Barracks was the Corps depot from 1966 to 1997, when it was forced to move due to the routing of the Channel Tunnel rail link.

It moved out of the town and relocated to Bedfordshire.

However, the Corps have retained strong links with Ashford, and last Sunday's parade was the fifth occasion the freedom of the borough has been marked.

The salute was taken by Major General Jim Hockenhull OBE, the Colonel Commandant of the Intelligence Corps. He was accompanied by the mayor of Ashford, Geraldine Dyer, and the pair inspected the troops on parade.

Major General Hockenhull said: "It has been my privilege to take the salute at this freedom parade in the



75th anniversary year of the re-formation of the Intelligence Corps. It is a chance for the Corps to re-affirm the hugely important bonds of friendship with the borough council and the people of Ashford and I am delighted that so many people turned out to watch the spectacle."

Cllr Dyer said: "It was a joy to attend the march and see the Intelligence Corps so warmly welcomed throughout the town. Given the close ties the Corps has had with the borough it was great to witness this be-

ing reaffirmed in a splendid, public way."

Colonel Jon Murray ADC, Intelligence Corps Colonel, who took part in the freedom of Ashford parade in May 1983 as a young soldier, said: "This parade has been a wonderful opportunity for the Intelligence Corps to show all that is best about the British Army. We are very proud that on parade were officers and soldiers, male and female, regular and reserve and a contingent of our retired personnel – representative of the whole Intelli-

gence Corps family and a demonstration that our reservists are a fully integrated part of the Intelligence Corps.

"Many of us on parade today have very fond memories of Ashford and I would like to thank the people of the town and Ashford Borough Council wholeheartedly for their continued support and friendship."

At a reception held in Ashford School after the parade, on behalf of the officers and soldiers of the Intelligence Corps, Major General Hocken-

hull presented the Mayor with a silver piece depicting a three sided Intelligence Corps cap badge and a rampant horse, representing the White Horse of Kent, to commemorate the event.

Many former Intelligence Corps members still live in Kent, having settled there over the many years the Corps spent in Ashford, and the Kent branch of the Intelligence Corps Association ensures that the bonds with the county and Ashford remain unbroken and provides pastoral care for former members in times of need.

3 Great performances at The Woodville this June

18 June

THURSDAY 7.30pm
THE AUDITORIUM



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★★★★★ A moving, emotional and passionate production... A definite must see for history and theatre addicts' (*Hairline*)

★★★★★ A performance worthy of an Academy Award Oscar' (*The Carrick*)

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We need to 'do more and do it faster' to save threatened birds

Molly Kersey looks at a new report which shows a number of Europe's birds are heading for possible extinction, and what can be done to help them...

AKENT wildlife expert has said the findings of a worrying new report, which show that 19 per cent of Europe's birds are heading for extinction, are "depressing, but not unexpected".

The European Red List of birds, published by the European Commission, examines and rates the conservation status of more than 500 species across the Continent.

The report provides detailed information on each species such as their population, habitat and the major threats to them, updating work that was carried out a decade ago.

Carried out over three years, it lists 13 per cent of birds as threatened – meaning they are vulnerable to becoming endangered in the near future, and six per cent as being near threatened.

Three key issues are among those blamed for driving this decline – habitat loss, illegal hunting and climate change.

And these pressures are increasing.

Sue Young, head of conservation, policy and evidence at the Kent Wildlife Trust, said: "It's very depressing news but not unexpected.

"Most habitats and species in the EU are in unfavourable condition, ecologically, according to

the State of Nature in the EU report published last month."

The State of Nature report provides comprehensive facts and figures on the trends of species and on the condition of nature in the EU.

Incorporating thousands of species and hundreds of habitat types, it concludes that greater conservation efforts are needed to achieve the EU target of halting the loss of biodiversity and degradation of ecosystem services by 2020.

Ms Young added: "In Kent, we know that there have been substantial declines, in the past century, of birds that were breeding regularly, including 10 that no longer even breed here now.

"It would be terrible to lose more species, given all the effort put into nature conservation, but that is what we could be facing, because the reasons for the declines are complex and many of them happen outside of nature reserves.

"We know that conservation work is effective, but it needs to happen on a wider scale, which is why Kent Wildlife Trust works with farmers and other landowners to improve habitat on a landscape scale."

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) spokesman Tim Webb, agrees.



VULNERABLE: The turtle dove has seen a severe decline. Credit: Andy Hay/rspb-images.com



PRESSURE: Lapwings have been facing difficulties. Credit: Andy Hay/rspbimages.com

He said: "Where we deliver conservation work, we have success, but we continue to lose much loved birds because the same focus isn't being delivered across the wider environment.

"This is further evidence that we need to do more and to do it faster."

Species that have been lost to Kent include the Kentish plover, which was lost because of disruption in coastal breeding areas, the wry-neck and redbacked shrike.

Climate change also appears to be causing decreases, with species such as the turtle dove seeing a decrease because of the impact on its African wintering grounds.

In the European Red List, turtledoves are classed as vulnerable, the third most serious level of threat, with 30 per cent to 49 per cent declines over three generations.

In the UK specifically, their decline has been even more severe, with the species seeing a 95 per cent drop since 1970.

The lapwing and Dartford warbler are also facing pressures.

The RSPB has been trialling new habitat management techniques in Kent to support the species, which includes helping to remodel landscapes in order to create perfect lapwing homes – the birds need lots of soil and short grassland to help them thrive.

Martin Harper, the RSPB's conservation director, said: "These red list assessments provide another red warning that nature across Europe is in trouble. It would have been unthinkable 20 years ago that birds like lapwing would be threatened species, now classed as vulnerable. The status of many species is deteriorating across Europe, reinforcing our commitment to maintain the European birds and nature directives to protect them and drive recovery programmes."

The Birds Directive of 1979 was set up to ensure far-reaching protection for all the wild birds in Europe.

A component of the directive bans actions



WARBLER: Ben Hall/rspb-images.com

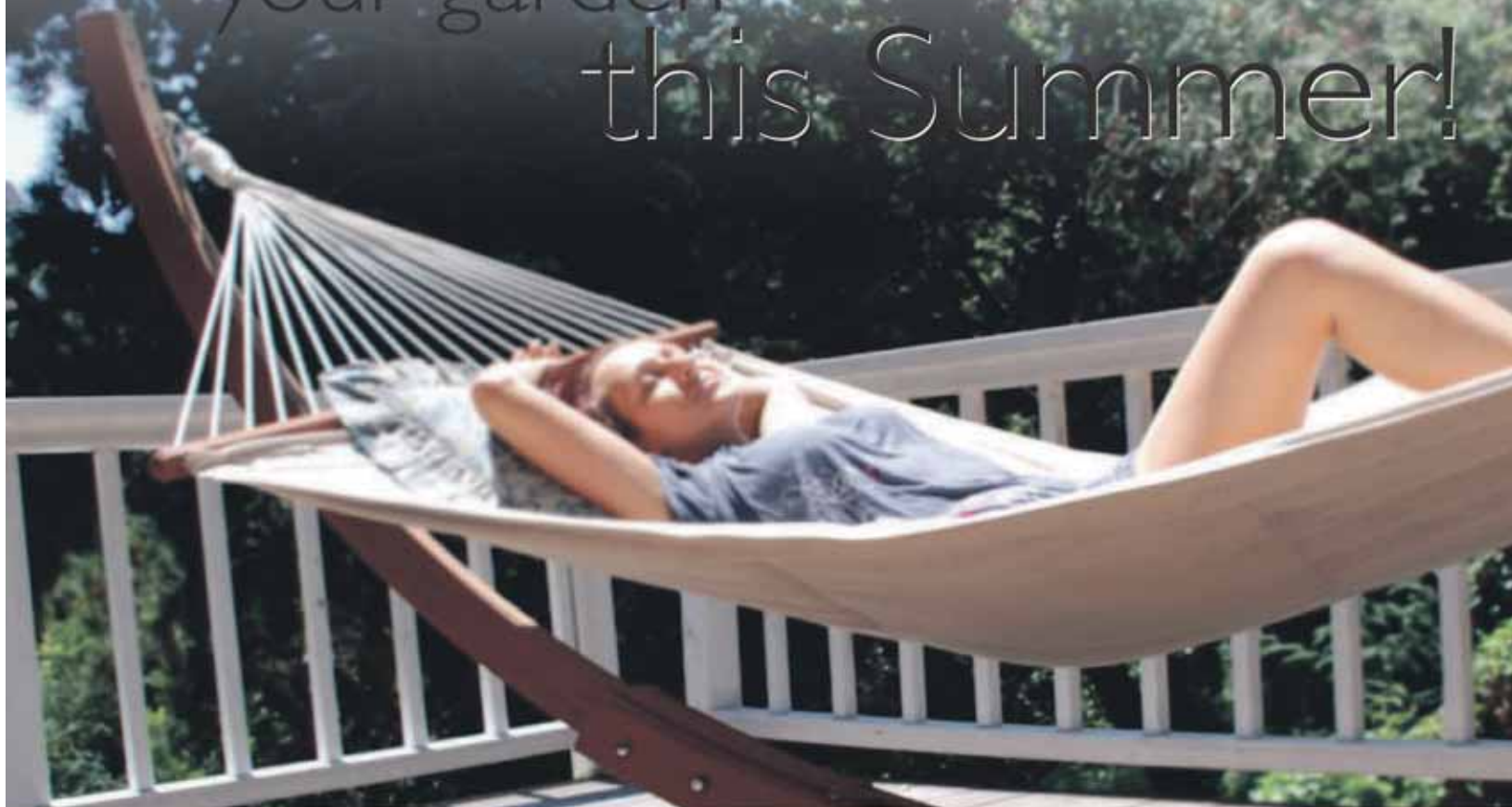
that will directly hurt birds including destroying their nests, stealing their eggs or deliberately capturing and killing them.

The number of bird species that can be hunted has also been limited to 82 species and sub-species, and this is only permitted during certain periods and with selected hunting methods.

Ms Young is supportive of these directives.

She said: "I agree that the nature directives – EU legislation – are vital to protect declining habitats and species, losses would have been far bigger without this legal protection."

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LIVELY: Brian Conley is developing an impressive reputation for his work in musical theatre, as well as his mainstream TV work

Roll up, roll up; Conley all set to dazzle in Barnum return

Popular TV star is the famous circus empressario as classic bounces back

LATER this month, Canterbury's Marlowe Theatre will host a production of *Barnum*.

This revival of the Cy Coleman-scored musical about Phineas T Barnum tells the story of the circus entertainer extraordinaire who was known as America's greatest showman.

Taking the lead role is actor and TV star Brian Conley. The native Londoner was a 1996 Olivier nominee for his performance as the Lithuanian-born American singer Al Jolson in the musical *Jolson*.

He has also appeared on stage as Professor Harold Hill in *The Music Man* at Chichester and as Edna Turnblad in *Hairspray* – the role originated in the West End by Michael Ball and then on screen by John Travolta. Most recently he played Fagin in Cameron Mackintosh's national tour of *Oliver!*.

The physical demands of the new show are quite intense, to put it mildly.

"Yes, they are," he says. "But I started training before Christmas last year, I was at circus school twice a week and then we were had five weeks of rehearsals. It's certainly physically demanding but no more so than doing panto twice a day. Sure, I have moments of thinking I'm too old for this, but then I think to myself, it's as if I've been called up by the England manager of the theatre world in Sir Cameron Mackintosh so I can't let him down. And the wonderful thing with Cameron is that there's absolutely no skimping; you know everything will be done to the highest degree."

PT Barnum exists on a spectrum of comparable stage roles for the actor over the years.

"Very much so," explains Mr

Conley. "I played Professor Harold Hill in *The Music Man* in Chichester in 2008 and he's a similar type of con man character, and Al Jolson in his own way was a hugely driven man whom you grew to love. In each case, you've got to play these roles without malice but with energy and charm."

"What I'm hoping I bring to *Barnum* is a real contact with the audience where we play off and talk to them and keep them engaged. It's important whatever you're performing to be visually interesting so you don't just stand there and waffle on."

The actor is well-known for playing American characters - and mastering the accent.

According to Mr Conley: "As a kid I used to listen to American songs, as I sang, and I always feel as if the energy of these great

American roles is not a million miles away from who I am – or as if it is me, but with an American accent."

"I remember when I played Al Jolson in Canada, I was really worried that the audience would see through me and realise that I wasn't American, but they believed I was. Before Jolson I did *Me and My Girl*, playing a cheeky Cockney lad, and after Jolson was *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* and then *Edna in Hairspray*. It can take me a little while to get the sound of the character, but once I find that, then I'm there."

Barnum is at the Marlowe Theatre from June 23 to July 4. Tickets are priced from £27 to £51.50 (concessions available; booking fee applies). Call the box office on 01227 787787, or visit marlowetheatre.com.

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Tribute that is 'closest you'll get to the real thing' perform

by Molly Kersey
molly.kersey@archant.co.uk

IN 1973 a record was released that helped to bridge the generational gap and become a rock anthem for people of all ages.

20th Century Boy was written and composed by Marc Bolan, and saw him and his band T Rex shoot to fame and cement their place in the original glam rock era.

Now, a tribute band will be recreating the music and stage presence of the original group at the Churchill Theatre, Bromley.

Tribute band T Rextasy have been performing for more than 20 years at venues all over the world - a career that actually outlives Mr Bolan's own T Rex.

The band was formed by frontman and lead guitarist Danielz, and is made up of Neil Cross on rhythm guitar, David Ryder Prangley on bass guitar and John Skelton on drums.

They are the only official live tribute band dedicated to Marc Bolan and T Rex that are endorsed by Marc Bolan's family and the original members of T Rex.

"They're the closest you're ever

going to get to the real thing," said original T Rex drummer Bill Legend.

"They are simply the best tribute band in the world," added Marc Bolan's producer Tony Visconti.

As well as this, the band were also awarded the accolade of the best live tribute band in the UK after they appeared on the BBC1 programme Battle of the Fantasy Bands, presented by Terry Wogan and Ulrika Jonsson, in 2001.

Marc Bolan's rock-a-boogie songs throughout the 1970s include Telegram Sam and Jeepster.

He obtained a top 20 record in 1976, which has become one of the band's memorable and signature tunes - I Love To Boogie.

The show is aiming to recreate an authentic Marc Bolan concert.

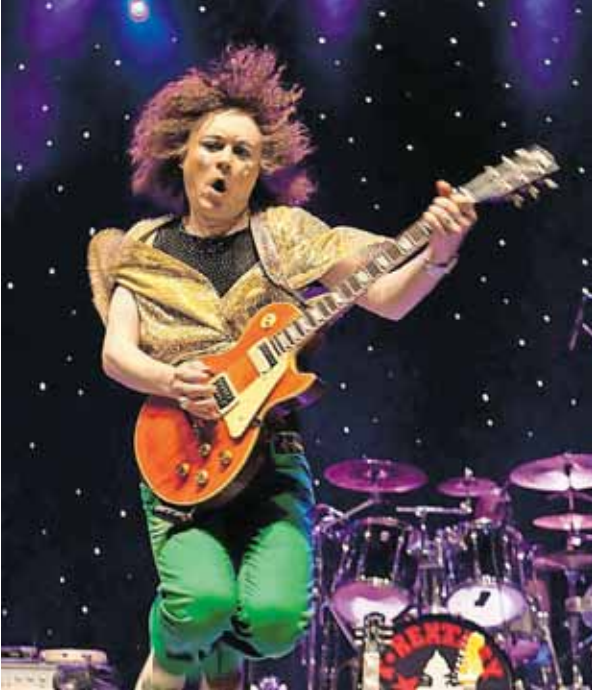
I Love To Boogie with T Rextasy will be at the Churchill Theatre on June 25.

The performance will be taking place at 7.30pm.

Tickets are £22 and they are available to buy now.

For more information or to book you can call the box office on 0844871760.

Alternatively you can visit the Churchill Theatre's website to book at www.atgtickets.com/bromley.



AUTHENTIC: The show will be recreating Marc Bolan and his band T Rex. Credit: Richard Shakespeare.

Rock tribute in Dartford

A Led Zeppelin and Deep Purple tribute act will be visiting The Orchard Theatre, Dartford.

The show will take place on July 22.

To book, call 01322 220000.



Vicar of Dibley is on stage

A full length play adapted from popular TV series The Vicar of Dibley will be performed at the Hazlitt Theatre, Maidstone.

The play will run from July 29 to August 1, with performances at 2.30pm and 7.30pm and tickets are £13. For details visit www.parkwoodtheatres.co.uk

Legends of 80s perform

LEGENDS of the 80s - Go West and Nik Kershaw - will be performing at the Leas Cliff Hall, Folkestone, on November 29 at 7.30pm.

For tickets, call the box office on 0844 871 3015.



Music and magic in show

FAMILY show Dr Longitude's Marvellous Imaginary Menagerie, will be performed at the Folkestone Quarterhouse on August 9.

The performance, which is suitable for all ages, features puppets, music and magic. It will start at 2.30pm.

For more, details call 01303 760750.

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Pop rock band join line-up

FOUR-piece pop rock band Room 94 have joined the line-up for this year's Dartford Festival.

The group is taking to the stage on July 18. Visit www.dartford.gov.uk/festival.



Record-breakers on stage

RECORD-breaking pop trio The Three Degrees will be performing in Bromley.

The trio are listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the longest-running female vocal group in history.

They will be at The Churchill Theatre on June 23, call 0844 8717620 to book.

Hit tribute will rock you

QUEEN tribute act Killer Queen will be performing at The Orchard Theatre, Dartford, as part of their 21st anniversary celebrations.

They will perform on June 20. Call 01322 220000 to book.



Farewell to Bellowhead

SUCCESSFUL folk band Bellowhead will be playing in Folkestone as part of their farewell tour.

The band formed in 2004 going on to headline festivals.

They will perform at the Leas Cliff Hall on November 17 at 7.30pm.

For tickets, call 0844 8713015.

Pixie Lott takes iconic Audrey Hepburn role

By Maria Chiorando

maria.chiorando@archant.co.uk

POP starlet Pixie Lott will be starring in a new production of *Breakfast At Tiffany's*.

The play will be touring the UK prior to its West End run and it will making its way to the Marlowe Theatre in Canterbury.

The singer will be playing Holly Golightly in the piece written by Truman Capote.

The same role was portrayed by Audrey Hepburn in the iconic 1961 film.

It is being given a new lease of life as a stage play.

Adapted by Pulitzer Prize finalist and Tony and Olivier Award-winning playwright Richard Greenberg and directed by Nikolai Foster, this tale of vivacious, good-time girl Holly Golightly and her fantastical existence in 1940s New York City, is told through the eyes of a young writer, completely fascinated by this exquisite extrovert who every woman wants to be, and every man wants to be with.

Breakfast at Tiffany's will mark Ms Lott's acting debut in a theatre



play.

Ms Lott said: "I am so excited to play Holly."

"I absolutely love her style and free spirit; she has always been an icon to me and I can't wait to bring my own personality to the role."

"Alongside music, I've always wanted to be in a play, and getting the opportunity to be in one of my all-time favourites and play this fabulous character is a dream come true."

Ms Lott, from Chislehurst, shot to fame after her single *Mama Do* was

released in 2009 and went straight to number one in the UK singles chart.

Her second single, *Boys and Girls*, enjoyed the same success and claimed the number one spot.

She was also a quarter finalist in hit BBC One show *Strictly Come Dancing*.

The play comes to The Marlowe Theatre from March 14 to 19, 2016.

Tickets go on sale to the public on June 19.

To book call the box office on 01227 787787 or visit www.marlowetheatre.com to book.



ICONIC: Ms Lott is 'so excited' to play Holly. Credit: Dave Benett.



DEBUT: It will be Ms Lott's first theatre play. Credit: Dave Benett.

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Cutting out processed grub to improve health

TV presenter and cookery writer Ching-He Huang describes how eating clean gained positive results

BACK in 2011, TV presenter and cookery writer Ching-He Huang began to suffer from allergic reactions, weight gain and tiredness.

As a healthy eater with a balanced diet, Taiwanese-born, London-based Huang couldn't work out the cause of her health problems, and embarked on a diet detox to combat them.

After making changes, ditching processed grub and eating 'clean' – fresh greens, salads, soups and fruit – the self-taught chef started to notice an improvement in just two weeks.

"Through a process of elimination, I found out that it wasn't the actual food or the ingredients I was allergic to, it was what the ingredients were

covered or preserved in," she recalls. Huang discovered it was sulphites – used as preservatives in the production of some food and drinks – that were giving her the reactions.

"We have more food available [today], but actually, when you break that down, most of it's not really food," she said.

"It's chemicals, it's processed food, it's food that can't be found in its natural form," she notes.

"Just like the planet, we have our own little ecosystem," the 36-year-old adds. "I thought, 'here I am trying to get people to love Chinese cuisine, but what's more important is people's health, and eating for health', so I decided to clean my own recipes up. Because it starts with you, to share



HEALTH: Ching He-Huang noticed an improvement after two weeks.

and promote this way of eating that's more mindful of one's own health."

Huang, who moved to the UK with her Chinese parents aged 11, has poured her experience and findings into a book of healthy recipes, called *Eat Clean: Wok Yourself To Health*.

Dishes in the book include Nourishing Mixed Seafood Miso Broth; Garlic, Basil, Tomato, Aubergine and Soba Noodle, and Smoked Tofu With Dinosaur Kale.

It also contains Huang's advice on eating clean – from a diet made up of 80 per cent plant-based foods and 20 per cent organic meat, fish, dairy and eggs, to using seasonal products and reducing sugar intake – and her top 20 clean foods, which include garlic,

dark leafy greens, avocado and fresh chilli.

Despite her passion for healthy eating, the chef – who studied economics and ran her own food production business before becoming a writer and presenter – confesses she's "no saint".

"I have a sweet tooth and that's been the hardest to curb," she says with a laugh. "It's a daily battle, of course it is!"

And while she admits eating clean can be technical and "perhaps makes people think about food in an unsexy way", Huang says it's time to face up to what we consume.

"We have to really uncover the best ingredients to sustain our health for the long-term," she adds.

Laugh at political party

COMIC Viv Groskop will be playing a fundraising show at the Tunbridge Wells Forum later this month.

The writer, broadcaster and stand-up comic, writes a weekly TV column for the Guardian and is a regular on BBC Radio 4's *Front Row* and *Saturday Review*. She performs on June 18 in the *Stand Up for Labour* event, starting at 7.30pm. Proceeds go to the Labour Party.

Basil Brush due in town

BRITAIN'S most lovable fox will be performing in a live stage show featuring storytelling and song.

The Basil Brush Show will be at the Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells, on July 5 at 2.30pm.

The family friendly show will feature Basil's fellow BBC2 *The Basil Brush Show* co-star Stephen, played by Chris Pizzey.

To book, call 01892 530613.

Honest book adapted

A ONE-man show adapted from Josh Kilmer-Purcell's autobiography will be performed at the Theatre Royal Margate on October 15.

I'm Not Myself These Days is adapted and performed by Tom Stuart.

It recounts a time when Josh found himself working as a drag queen and battling his alcoholism.

For tickets, call 01843 292795.

Tragic play in Margate

LEGENDARY musical *Miss Saigon* will be performed at the Margate Winter Gardens on June 24.

The musical love story tells the tale of young bar girl Kim, who has been orphaned by the war, who falls in love with an American GI named Chris.

But tragedy strikes and their lives are torn apart by the fall of Saigon.

For tickets call 01843 868302.

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Rock solid safari fun in Zimbabwe

TRAVEL REVIEW: Zimbabwe

by Sarah Marshall

NOW in full spring bloom, a purple haze of jacaranda trees swathes Harare's quiet suburbs. Images of angry rioters, broadcast worldwide 15 years ago, are no more than ghostly memories, put to rest in the dry, dusty soil where a few stray petals now lay.

Leaving the Zimbabwean capital behind us, we pass groups of Seventh-Day Adventists shrouded in long white smocks and carrying wooden shepherds' crooks.

Escaping the burning late October sun, their religious ceremonies are conducted under the shade of gravity-defying sandstone rock stacks, similar to the balancing boulders once depicted on the now defunct Zimbabwe dollar notes.

Spiralling hyperinflation, which reached an estimated mind-boggling 79.6 billion per cent in 2008, along with violent land seizures, unashamed political corruption and inevitable international trade embargoes brought one of Africa's richest nations to its knees. A thriving tourist industry collapsed, safari lodges closed and excellent guides, reputed to be the best trained on the continent, left for a better life elsewhere.

But fortunes seem to be changing. Despite Robert Mugabe's steadfast refusal to relinquish power, foreign investment is returning, new lodges are opening and tourists are discovering an overwhelmingly hospitable country, rich in diverse wildlife, heart-stopping scenery and traces of ancient civilisations.

We're driving south-east to Gonarezhou National Park, covering an area of 5,000sq km.

Overhanging the Save River, just



DIVERSE: Cheetah cubs play in Malilangwe Wildlife Reserve, Zimbabwe. Credit: PA Photo/Renato Granieri.

outside the park boundaries and close to the Mahenye village, Chilo Gorge Safari Lodge is working hard to build a bridge between community and wildlife, with tourism providing the obvious stepping stone.

A poker hot sun is already climbing skyward by the time we set off on a morning drive, timed to coincide with the park's 6am opening. But there's no need to anguish about being first off the starting block; we

have the place to ourselves.

Powering across sandy, dried out riverbeds, we head into the bush, weaving through fans of ilala palms and 2,000-year-old baobab trees. One trunk is so bulbous, our guide Thomas claims poachers once used it as a hideout.

We encounter several nyala, a species of antelope native to southern Africa, and catch a glimpse of wild dogs.

Elephants, on the other hand, are a game drive guarantee - there are 11,000 in the park - although their behaviour is far from predictable.

After getting too close to one very protective herd, we're charged by an agitated bull for nearly five minutes. Thomas tells me many of the skittish creatures are still reeling from the long civil war in Mozambique, just a few kilometres away.

"Did the elephants interview you?"

TRAVEL FACTS

Sarah Marshall was a guest of The Ultimate Travel Company (www.theultimatetravelcompany.co.uk; 020 3051 8098) who offers an 11-day safari To Chilo Gorge Safari Lodge, Singita Pamushana, Amalinda and Somalisa from £6,420pp. Includes all meals, drinks, activities, private transfers and flights from Heathrow with Kenya Airways.

asks another guide wryly when we return to the lodge. "If you weren't scared, then you passed."

Fortunately, I make the grade, and my next stop, the neighbouring Singita Pamushana, is a breeze in comparison. Set within the private 130,000 acre fenced Malilangwe Reserve, the wildlife - a mixture of antelope, birds, big cats and even black and white rhino - is easier to manage, and there's greater flexibility with game drives.

With infinity plunge pools on the private decks of villas perched high in the rocks, it's an obvious hit with A-listers. But for all its grand interior design, Pamushana's greatest attractions are outdoors.

My guide, Time, and I set out at 4.30am, to spend a morning in a secluded hide next to a watering hole.

When we arrive, the watering hole is already busy. Giraffe splay their legs and gently bow down to slurp the water, while swarms of quelea "locust birds" blow like gusty clouds from one bush to another. Two cheetah cubs emerge from the long grass, their white Mohican tufts backlit by the morning sun, with their mother in close pursuit.

All the while we sit quietly, and they never once notice we're there.

Film Reviews by Damon Smith



JURASSIC WORLD

(12A, 130 mins) Science Fiction/Thriller

BASED on characters created by Michael Crichton, this fourth instalment of the blockbusting dinosaur franchise returns to ill-fated Isla Nublar where the

Jurassic World theme park is open and functioning under the control of the Patel Corporation.

Operations Manager Claire Dearing, played by Bryce Dallas Howard, oversees the park on a daily basis including laboratories where scientists are playing God by performing genetic modification experiments to breed a new dinosaur: the ferocious and highly intelligent Indominus Rex.

When this hulking beast escapes confinement and goes on the rampage in a park crowded with terrified tourists, animal wrangler Owen Grady, played by Chris Pratt, races to the rescue.

QUEEN & COUNTRY

(15, 115 mins) Drama/Romance/War/Comedy

IN 1987, John Boorman seduced Oscar voters with his autobio-

graphical comedy drama, *Hope And Glory*, and garnered five nominations including Best Picture, Best Director and Best Original Screenplay.

Taking its title from a refrain in Elgar's stirring *Pomp And Circumstance Marches*, the defiantly unsentimental film relived Boorman's memories of the Blitz through the eyes of a nine-year-old boy called Bill Rohan.

Queen & Country continues the misadventures of Boorman's fictional hero, unfolding almost 10 years later when Bill has come of age and can now serve his country.

Bill, played by Callum Turner, lives on an island in the River Thames with his parents Clive and Grace, grouchy grandfather George and free-spirited sister Dawn.

The young man enlists in the army and prepares other fresh-faced recruits for the Korean War.



FREAKS

(12A, 58 mins) Thriller

Tod Browning's unforgettable 1932 thriller was banned for many years in the UK and more than 80 years later, with this re-release, the film still possesses the ability to shock and unsettle.

The story revolves around a

midget called Hans, played by Harry Earles, who falls in love with trapeze artist Cleopatra, played by Olga Baclanova.

She only wants to be with Hans for his money, and plots with her strongman lover Hercules (Henry Victor) to poison him.

However, the other 'freaks' learn of her dastardly plan and plot their own bloodthirsty revenge.

AS Father's Day looms, everything should be flourishing in the garden. But there are always some little extras gardening dads could use to help them in their outdoor work and play area.

Whatever your budget, you should be able to find him something which will make his day.

If he's short of gardening shoes, check out the new pebbles design from BackDoorShoes, which are ideal for slipping on and off at the door, for gardening or nipping up to the shed, without ruining his regular shoes or trainers.

They come in a range of designs up to size 13. They are £20 and can be purchased at www.backdoorshoes.co.uk.

Gnomes may be naff, but there's a lot of them about, even if they're not allowed at the Chelsea Flower Show.

The new Ninja Gnome, equipped with sword, should create some laughs, with a solar panel on the back which lights up his eyes. The price is £19.99 and he can be bought from www.iwantoneofthose.com.

If he's a wow with the barbecue, treat him to a Personalised BBQ Tools Set, equipped with tongs, spatula, fork and meat brush.

Utensils are made from stainless steel with natural wooden handles, presented in a canvas zip bag with up to 10 characters to personalise the bag. You can purchase them for £34.95 at www.prezzybox.com.

Vegetable gardeners with limited



HUMOUR: The Ninja Gnome, equipped with a sword and a solar panel at the back which lights up his eyes, is a gift that will help create some laughs.

Gifts for green-fingered dads

space may enjoy rich pickings from Suttons new Stacks of Flavour personalised wooden crates, which can be added to as time goes on, or just kept small enough to harvest lovely quick-growing salad leaves and microgreens throughout the season.

Each crate is made with FSC sustainably sourced pine in 12mm thickness for extra strength.

They have been given a three-year protective stain in a beautiful antique colour and have smooth contoured handles for easy lifting.

They also come with an easy to fit durable liner.

Prices start at £20 from www.suttons.co.uk.

Dads who are likely to be stuck in the office beyond Father's Day may

like a little reminder on their desk of the great outdoors.

With this in mind, award-winning design and manufacturer Bluw has created a Desktop Garden complete with propagation tray, drip tray, soil, seeds and full instructions, encased in a decorative mini garden fence, to give him a little green space on his desktop.

They are £14.25 from Amazon.

All that digging can be thirsty work for the busy gardener, so treat your dad to a beer or two on Father's Day – check out The Thirsty Gardener Gift Set from Dobbies, containing three different types of beer with novel labels in an easy-to-carry box.

The beers and carry box are priced at £11.99.

Trains & Miniature Traction Engines

Sat 20th & Sun 21st June 2015

SEE THE FOLLOWING AT NEW ROMNEY STATION
from 10am to 4pm EACH DAY

- Miniature Traction Engines on display and doing demonstrations.
- Visiting model railway layout.
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- Some associated trade stalls.

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All above items are subject to availability. Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway reserves the right to alter or cancel anything mentioned on this flyer.

Riley's Miniature Railway will be in residence for the weekend

For further details, visit www.rhdr.org.uk or call our Sales Team on **01797 362353**

FATHER'S DAY
21st June 2015
Drive a steam engine sessions for Dad's at New Romney station

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Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances, and a daytime phone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit all letters.

Licence answer to foxhunting

I WAS interested to read your article on foxhunting (KoS, May 31).

I believe the ban on hunting cannot be effective as it is impossible to police. I would replace it with a licensing system.

The foxhunters would sign up to an agreed set of rules governing the way hunting was organised, for example if a fox took cover near houses then the hounds would have to be called off, then if the rules were broken they would lose their licence.

The anti-foxhunt people would have an incentive to police the hunts. This would enable them to get evidence for the licence to be taken away.

Personally, I like the spectacle of the hunt but feel that nothing is taken away from this if a hunt is following a dragged scent and not a live fox.

Gerald Carr,
Gravesend

Stop Europe be more involved

PERHAPS I'm not the only reader to feel concern about the hopes of Stuart Jeffery leader of the Kent Green Party (KoS, May 24), who stated that he would like to see the creation of regional assemblies covering areas roughly the size of those covered by MEPs.

If we allow an 'ever closer' political/financial relationship to the European Union, these regions would be imposed upon us - doing away with our ancient boroughs and counties.

The very idea of that is too ghastly to even contemplate.

Meanwhile, David Sparks, chair of the Local Government Association, said: "The association is keen to see powers de-centralised, but with a focus on recognising the existing towns, cities and counties," adding, "without reorganising them into artificial regions."

The future of this country depends upon protecting our freedom and independence to govern ourselves under our own law.

June Moore,
Tunbridge Wells

It's the act not the basic idea

WITH regard to human rights

LETTER OF THE WEEK



Fight the threat of the TTIP treaty

THE Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) is a treaty currently being negotiated between the US and Europe.

It has many dangerous aspects and is therefore being kept very secret by the negotiators.

One example of what the treaty includes is that under TTIP businesses can sue governments if the government does something that impacts their profits.

For example if the government wants cigarette packets to be plain or contain negative aspects of the results of smoking, then the cigarette companies could sue the government in an non-judicial court (run by business) and the government could then be forced to rescind any such legislation.

In effect it passes power from a government to big business. This is currently happening in Australia where the government signed such a treaty and is now

being sued by large American tobacco company, Philip Morris.

In South America, a country is being sued after refusing to allow a western gold mining company from starting a gold extraction system that would have poisoned the water system for many miles around. The company are suing the government for much more than the country's annual GDP. This is madness.

This treaty can also force a government to privatise services such as the NHS. This would give us a health service like the American system where the rich are fine but the poor need medical help from charities. Do you want that? If no then we need to put pressure on our MEPs to vote against this horrendous treaty.

This treaty is good for big business but very bad for the general public.

Malcolm Wright
Canterbury

legislation (KoS, last week), it is not so much the content of the Human Rights Act that is the problem, it is the control of that law.

Britain is no longer the final arbiter over the laws of our country.

The final word is not British. It is a decision taken by a mix of often unqualified anonymous appointees in Europe. Not good enough.

British law is respected and widely adopted throughout the world.

It has always been fair and reasonable.

By withdrawing from the EU

version, that will not change.

British residents should be controlled and ruled by British law. British courts should have the final say. The politicians can argue about the content - reject bad law and keep good law.

Nothing wrong with that.

As head of my household, I and my wife say what is acceptable.

All I want is that in my country I and my countryman say what is acceptable.

Roy Martin,
Maidstone

Let's just be nice to one another

WHY oh why are the people of the world not at peace with each other?

All their differences be they political religious or geographic, I believe they can be resolved by understanding because to understand is to forgive, surely we could get to know each others differences by listening to each other and each others points of view.

With God's help we can begin to understand and forgive as God's peace transcends all understanding.

Surely it is possible to get together in the cause of peace?

Tom Mason,
Rochester

Is this the 'Gospel of St Duff'?

NO surprises from Ray Duff, still raging at anything and anybody that doesn't subscribe to the 'gospel' according to St. Duff! (KoS, ad nauseum).

I really don't understand what his problem is, although I could quote numerous parts of the Bible to support my argument, he says the Bible is, 'a garbled history of myth and legend'. So what's all the fuss about, if he has a problem with the Christian 'club', either follow the rules, or just don't join. Simple.

There's a lot of organisations I actually detest, but there's no point raging at the world about it and spitting spite at everybody!

He tries to bring in yet again the issue of homosexuality, of which I made no mention, but was just correcting his inaccuracy about Jesus coming to change the law.

I and many others personally have no problem whatsoever with homosexuality, it seems it's mostly Ray Duff that does.

Phil Granger,
West Malling

Ukip has answer to Crossing woes

IT SEEMS a week does not go by without yet another article on the Dartford Crossing (KoS, last week).

Perhaps if it was made free, as promised, then we would not have this continued extortion.

Ukip is the only party against all forms of road tolling and future EU enforced road tolling.

Terry Hudson,
Whitstable

KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles

The way KoS will create our unique and compelling content is to follow these 10 principles:

Kent on Sunday will:

1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.

2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.

3) Be written in clear, concise English.

4) Not be overly sensational.

5) Have a sense of humour.

6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.

7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.

8) Highlight topical issues of concern to people living in the county.

9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.

10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.



**Village Hall,
Luddesdown**
by **Jean Sheridan,**
Cuxton, near
Rochester

To see your photograph printed, email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk, or post it to **Archant KOS Media, Images of Kent, Kent House, 81 Station Road, Ashford, TN23 1PP**. Be sure to include your name, address and a contact telephone number. Unfortunately we cannot return any prints, and please do not send negatives. Note: all digital images must be no less than 200dpi. Please note, our relationship with MyFerryLink has now come to an end. We thank them for their long support.

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Or **Text.. REPLY2** (leave a space) the six-digit box number (leave a space) and then enter your message & send to **80098** eg: **REPLY2 123456 hi get in touch...** then send to **80098** Successfully forwarded messages cost £1.50 per message (Max 160 characters). You must exchange 7 messages each before you can swap contact details. Messages may be moderated for your safety and security.

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Women Seeking

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.53 per minute plus network extras. Texts cost £1.50 per message sent.

mydate24

FEMALE easy going, kind, loving, genuine, romantic, car boots, gardening, seeking male with GSOH. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417603

SUSIE fit, friendly, looking for someone to love and look after me, preferably older, N/S male with own car. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392537

HAPPY young looking lady, 62, likes socialising, conversation, seeking nice man to share good times with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407383

GORGEOUS flower, Ashford Kent, 51, larger lady, large personality, easy going, seeks male who likes dogs, animals for relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417435

KATIE, 5ft 5, slim dark hair, very attractive female, likes most things in life and a good laugh, looking for a similar male. Text only to Mailbox No: 472217

NICE female looking for decent genuine male for friendship to start out with. Text only to Mailbox No: 4710874

BLONDE female, 5ft 1ins, size 12, likes meals out, drinks, nights in, walks, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409025

JAN 63, young at heart, petite, 5ft 2ins, brown hair, blue eyes, GSOH, likes cooking, countryside, travel, days out, seeks easy going male, 60-70. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416349

BLONDE female, 47, looking for fun, sensual, experienced, understanding, seeking similar. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415675

JANINE 36, faithful, sincere, will never stray seeking similar male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414629

SMS MATCHMAKER

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Call 0207 720 7130 Monday - Friday 10am - 4pm or email us at support@jmediauk.co.uk

SUE young at heart, good looking, enjoy life, socialising, beach walks, gardening, theatre, seeking male, 55-65 to share life with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416171

JACKIE 32, attractive professional, very smart and feminine, long brown hair, seeks smart, confident, older male who knows how to treat a lady. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416297

BECKY 23, classy blonde, long blonde hair, blue eyes seeks loving older guy to spoil and pamper her. Discretion assured/guaranteed. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416233

LINDA 26, cheeky, curvy brunette, a little shy at first, likes to look after herself, seeks dark haired male for discreet naughty but fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416195

TERESA 39, petite, cuddly and bubbly seeks kind older male to travel, have fun, and take care of, pamper and flirt with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416081

LUCY stunning tall brunette, looking for exciting times, seeks like-minded, adventurous male who is willing to try anything once or maybe even twice! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416079

PETITE blonde, blue eyes, very feminine and sensual seeks younger male for friendship and discreet fun. Can accommodate. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416077

SARAH 29yr old pretty slim single mum of one, interesting, lively, good fun, enjoys nights in/out, music, seeking similar easy going, genuine, honest man/dad to get to know. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415841

ANGIE attractive nurse 39yrs, new to area/advertising, likes dog walking, being sociable, meals in/out, W/LTM honest, fun male for possible ltr. looks unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415827

LISA attractive petite Filipino female, very lonely, wanting to find love, companionship and to be happy, looking for friendship and more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415549

FEMALE seeking male for adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413809

SUE 65, 5ft 8ins, blonde hair, fashionable, smoker, GSOH, enjoys meals out, travel, animals, W/LTM kind, shyish man for friendship, maybe more. Thanet area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415735

INTELLIGENT funny guy without a huge ego required for damaged heart. Casey 39, size 10, curves in all the right places, pretty, kind, loving, genuine, romantic and available. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415509

BLACK lady 43, sincere, down to earth, fun loving, likes theatre, cinema, meals out, walks, seeking white gent with GSOH, sincere and down to earth. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415477

JENNY voluptuous blonde turned well-presented female, enjoys being and giving pampering, cooking, cosy nights, looking for some broadminded excitement. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415399

JOYCE 39, attractive GSOH, loves nights out, honest, loyal, fun to be with, looking for mature male for adult companionship, meals out and hopefully more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415561

NICOLETTE 32 petite professional attractive black female looking for similar hardworking white male who like me loves life and is serious about finding a LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415545

PAT blonde blue eyed curvy, cuddly female, attractive, likes swimming, gardening, holidays, my job/home, looking for happiness with quiet content grounded male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415533

MANDY 35, petite attractive slim female with very GSOH, likes to keep fit, meals in/out, W/LTM genuine child friendly guy/dad for fun times together. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415513

JACKIE very pretty leggy well-mannered/educated 28yr old female, loves nights in/out, sports, W/LTM sincere male up to 35yrs for friendship, hopefully ltr. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415377

Men Seeking

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.53 per minute plus network extras. Texts cost £1.50 per message sent.

mydate24

MICK 50, seeks attractive female for nice times out, genuine calls only. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417691

ROAD worker looking for fun times and hopefully more. Great sense of humour. Laughs a lot. Looking for the same in lady. Text only to Mailbox No: 4753610

ROCKABILLY guy, seeks rock chick, 25-50 who likes 50's rock music and bands. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 284750

MALE 48, looking for fun loving female to enjoy outdoor activities, nights in and meals out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 392212

BRIAN 71, likes meals out, drinks, nights in, music, walks, seeks female with similar interests. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417697

ANDY 5ft 5ins, retired, 69, solvent, likes most things, meals out, holidays, golf, swimming, GSOH, seeks female. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417821

67YR old male, slim, 5ft 5ins, many interests, likes holidays, meals out, seeking slim female 55-65 with GSOH to share TLC. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414023

BARRY 47, 6ft, well built, seeks female for winning, dining and fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361787

EASY going male, 48, divorced, kids grown up time to meet someone new. Enjoy most things and will give anything ago. Text only Mailbox No: 4646694

DONNA 36yrs un-modest but very attractive, nice eyes, good figure, GSOH, OHAC, great job, sick of never meeting Mr Right, looking for someone special. Genuine male please. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415187

ALISON 27yr old very bored broadminded female with plenty of free time on her hands looking for some adult fun times. Call me, I won't disappoint. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415177

DEE lonely divorced female, slim, bubbly, attractive redhead, loves cuddles, looking for a man who can restore my faith in love and make me laugh. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414961

JACKIE extremely sensual lady but for your eyes-only! likes horses, keeping fit, gardening looking for genuine love interest and companionship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414721

TERI separated single lady, blonde, blue eyes, slim, W/LTM compatible male for genuine friendship, meals out, weekends away, nights out and more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414361

GARETH handsome 40's pilot, strong tall build, seeks daytime discreet passion with lady 30-65. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414421

KIND, tall, medium build, smart, easy going widower, 71 WLM Lady 60s early 70s, for easy going friendship OHAC. Text only to Mailbox No: 4641218

DOVER male 54 seeks female for friendship, conversation and maybe more. Text only to Mailbox No: 4682630

STU 52, looking for a sincere woman to share the long winter nights with. Text only to Mailbox No: 4609904

KEEN cyclist 58, non competitive, seeks similar female for sea wall, countryside ride, walking etc for fun, laughs and whatever. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413337

FEMALE pillion passenger sought for motorcycle rides / adventures and anything else good/bad. Any age/status, 59yr old male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416827

CHIPS on the pier, walks on the beach/countryside, VGSOH, 58yrs old, fit male, seeks female for laughs and love and whatever. NE Kent. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411725

48YR old divorced male, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun and laughter. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380789

LOCAL Sevenoaks man, seeks local lady for fun and friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417127

VINCENT 48, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun nights in and out. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 377397

KEEN cyclist 58, non competitive, seeks similar female for sea wall, countryside ride, walking etc for fun, laughs and whatever. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 413337

M I K E Canterbury mature male, seeks single mum/lady, 28-42, slim-medium build for loving, caring relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415275

BRIAN 70, Maidstone, seeking female, 60 plus, likes meals out, cinema, theatre, days out and cosy nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410611

CARING man enjoys going out, looking for someone to take out and have a laugh and to share some nights in! Text only to Mailbox No: 4736191

ED, retired Essex guy, astute & wise. N/S. no ties, with looks & humour seeks younger female needing life's mentor/tutor. Text only to Mailbox No: 4485189

GENUINE fun sexy healthy guy 55, with no ties, looking to date attractive lady 45/57 for fun times and more. Text only to Mailbox No: 4717147

HARRY 50, ex soldier, 6ft, well built, seeking lady to wine and dine. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417015

BARRY divorced, 6ft, well built, seeking fun time girl for good times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412177

GRAHAM tall, semi retired, Piscean, likes sailing, seeks female, any nationality. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415463

MALE blond hair, blue eyes, seeking female with GSOH, 45-60. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416445

JON seeking female for fun and friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416771

MALE blond hair, blue eyes, seeking female with GSOH, 45-60. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416445

TALL male, likes meals out, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416899

MALE 46, wishes to meet female of similar age for fun, friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415923

JACK 47, tall, good-looking, average build, GSOH, seeks broadminded female for discreet no strings fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416867

ASHFORD male, 66, GSOH, easy going, smoker, down to earth, adventurous, seeks like-minded female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416845

MALE 70's, fit, looking for lady to share life with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416663



MALE 46, wishes to meet female of similar age for fun, friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415923

PETE 49, slim, 5ft 7in s, smoker, creative, likes art, live bands, outdoors, seeks similar female for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416421

HARRY 50, ex soldier, 6ft, well built, seeking lady to wine and dine. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417015

BARRY divorced, 6ft, well built, seeking fun time girl for good times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 412177

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MALE blond hair, blue eyes, seeking female with GSOH, 45-60. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416445

JON seeking female for fun and friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416771

MALE blond hair, blue eyes, seeking female with GSOH, 45-60. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416445

TALL male, likes meals out, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416899

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FEMININE sensual female, slim-medium build wanted by slim, kind male for daytime meets, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414809

JON seeking female for fun and friendship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416771

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MALE 46, wishes to meet female of similar age for fun, friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415923

JACK 47, tall, good-looking, average build, GSOH, seeks broadminded female for discreet no strings fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 416867

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Homes & Gardens

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flowers**

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SLEEK: A new kitchen can revitalise the home

Our kitchen makeover tips

WHEN IT comes to fitting a new kitchen, you can of course, design it yourself.

However, expert advice is hard to beat.

A good kitchen designer will probably think of things you haven't, and should know their products inside out.

Some outlets will design your kitchen free of charge and give you access to a planning tool so you can have a go yourself.

When it comes to thinking about how you want your new kitchen to be, it can be overwhelming.

Working out what you do and don't like about your current kitchen, and what you do and don't want from your new one, is a good place to start.

If you're having an extension built to accommodate the kitchen, deciding how to divide up the space into cooking, dining and living areas should be done before designing the kitchen itself.

It's a good idea to wait until the shell of the extension is up because seeing it may change how you want to use the space.

Waiting for the kitchen to be delivered can take longer than you think. Some kitchens take weeks, or even months, to arrive, which can seem like an eternity if you're managing without one.

And don't forget to find a good



WORKMANSHIP: The right fitter will make the most of your new kitchen

kitchen fitter in advance and let them know when the kitchen is due to arrive to avoid unnecessary delays.

Recent research from B&Q, which coincided with its Homefit installation service (www.diy.com/diy/homefit) being endorsed by the Which? Trusted Traders scheme, revealed that we spend more time choosing the colour of our kitchen than finding the right person to fit it.

The fitter will be a crucial element - you don't want to choose badly, then spend several years or more getting annoyed with wonky fittings, or work surfaces that haven't been fitted properly.

Surfaces are a key part - both visual and practical - of the kitchen.

Wooden surface tops are becoming more popular.

If you've opted for wooden worktops, leave enough time to oil them thoroughly before installation to protect them from marks and warping.

The worktops must be stored and oiled flat, so they do take up a lot of room. Once they're fitted, remember to oil any cutouts, especially the one for the sink, and keep oiling the worktops in situ - once a day for a week, once a week for a month and once a month for a year, a builder told me recently.

The worktops need to be oiled on all sides, but especially the top, and it's essential to use a good wood oil. The Sadolin oil takes a while to soak in -



WOOD: Special care should be made of wooden surfaces and fixtures

The scent-sational blooms

STEPPING out onto the patio to be engulfed in waves of different fragrances is one of the most glorious sensations of summer.

Of course, there are the obvious candidates among the annuals – pots of night-scented stocks, traditional nicotiana (tobacco plants), vanilla-scented heliotrope with its violet or white blooms, blue-vein surfinia and night phlox.

For tall accents, plant old-fashioned highly scented varieties of sweet pea, *Lathyrus odoratus*, in a deep pot to climb a wigwam of bamboo canes and provide fantastic scented blooms for cut flowers, so you can have fragrance inside and out.

You need to cut sweet pea flowers regularly to keep them coming, or they will just set seed, which tells the plant the flowering period's over.

All can be planted in pots to wait their delicious aromas around the patio for you and your guests to inhale, but if you have beds or borders close by, you can also make the most of those with more permanent plantings.

Make a low border out of dwarf lavender such as 'Munstead', whose purple flowers will be a magnet to bees and will keep narrow beds looking neat. They're easy to maintain and should flower throughout summer. Just prune them after flowering to keep them tidy, but don't cut back into old wood or they won't recover.

Among my favourite shrubs is mock orange (*Philadelphus*), which,



BEAUTIFUL: some blooms are not just a treat for the eyes, but for the nose as well. You can create a wonderful patch of fragrance, by blending different plants. This will also give a lovely traditional country garden look to your flower beds.

although not a classic climber, will grow up against trellis and fences, producing delicate white flowers in early summer which should fill even a large garden with fragrance.

This deciduous shrub looks lovely in the border, used in groups as screening or simply as a stand-alone specimen plant. It even makes excellent cut flowers indoors.

Roses can also add scent to a patio, although if you want to put them in a pot, make it a big one, as their roots like to spread out. Alternatively, plant roses in a bed near the patio. You can't go far wrong with David Austin English Roses such as the deep pink Gertrude Jekyll, or try a new pure white variety, Desdemona.

Honeysuckle and jasmine can also

be grown to climb up trellis or create colour and fragrance trained on pergolas and arbours or around garden seating areas.

When planting, consider where you are going to put your scented specimens. It's no use planting a rose at the end of your garden if the only time you're ever going to sniff it is when you're weeding that area.

Take into account where you're likely to be seated at particular times of day too, and consider plant height. It may be that simply securing a couple of pots at nose height on your outside wall, filled with aromatic plants, works best. Fragrant bulbs, such as lilies, freesias and some begonias including Begonia 'Fragrant Falls Improved', can also be grown in pots.

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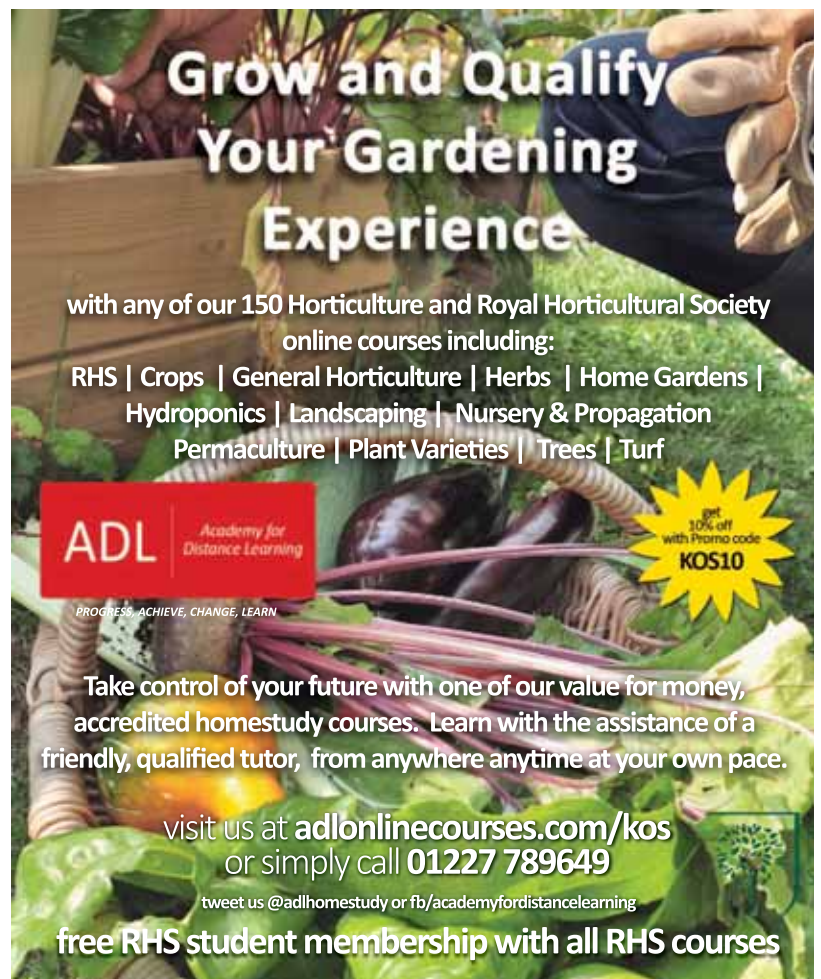
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Grow yourself a little taste of summer sun in your home

IMAGINE stepping out on to your patio to pick fresh herbs for your cooking – from fragrant basil to accompany ripe tomatoes and mozzarella, coriander to sprinkle on spicy curries and salads, mint to add to your Pimm's or rosemary to sprinkle over lamb chops on the barbecue. Sounds idyllic doesn't it?

Fresh herbs are such a staple in today's kitchens, yet the shop-bought ones so often end up wilting on the windowsill before you've had time to use them.

If you are planning a herb garden or a group of herbs in pots, place them near the kitchen where they are easily accessible. A small collection can be planted in a cartwheel pattern, or even in a planter with separate pockets, each segment planted with a different herb.

On a larger scale, a bed can be divided into segments, each for a different herb, fringed with a dwarf hedge

such as lavender to define the edges.

When planting a border of herbs, place the tallest at the back so they don't shade out the smaller ones. Angelica grows up to 2m (6ft) and will self-seed freely. Mint and lemon balm are invasive so should be planted in pots or buckets in the ground so their roots are confined and don't swamp other less vigorous plants.

Groups of symmetrically arranged raised beds provide an easy and attractive way to cultivate a wide range of herbs without having to tread on soil, plus you can cater for the soil and watering needs of different herbs.

You can just as easily grow pots of herbs on your patio or in a window-box in the right situation and with the right soil.

Most herbs used for cooking and for their fragrance are natives of the Mediterranean and do best in warm sunny conditions in well-drained



DELICIOUS: It is easy to grow your own herbs

soil, with added grit. Those in containers may need daily watering in hot weather but some, such as basil, will resent going to bed at night with wet leaves or sodden compost, so water in the morning before they are in direct sunlight.

Many herbs don't like rich, moisture-retentive growing conditions, so you'll need to give them what they need. Cori-

ander doesn't like being crowded and won't thrive in cool conditions, parsley is greedy and requires a rich, moisture-retentive soil, while thyme prefers poor, very well-drained soil.

Basil likes warmth and shelter but won't do well in searing sun, so grow it in pots of soilless potting compost in semi shade.

Remove the flowers from shortlived

leafy herbs such as chervil and basil to keep them growing longer and from coriander and dill if you don't want seeds but would rather have the leaves.

Before too long, you should be able to pick aromatic, flavoursome herbs from your garden rather than veering towards the wilting leaves of the shop-bought ones on your windowsill.

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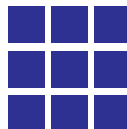
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Marble adds touch of glamour

MARBLE may once have been the preserve of swanky homes and museums and, most notably, India's Taj Mahal, but it's now on the move and appearing in homes in all sorts of guises.

Whether it's faux effects on wallpaper and fabrics or embellishing rooms in its natural state, it adds a classic touch to any decor, and designers have lost their hearts again to this gleaming stone with its subtle, unique patterns.

Marble has long been favoured in functional areas like halls, kitchens and bathrooms, where its handsome looks and practicality have always made it a savvy choice.

But now it's making its way to entertaining areas, like open-plan living rooms, too, and bedrooms. Underfloor heating means that floors in this material need no longer be cold to the toes.

Marble's having a fashion moment too, as perfectly demonstrated in the dramatic fabric of actress Cate Blanchett's Giles Deacon dress at the Cannes Film Festival recently.

"The marble revival has, literally, rather taken people by surprise, but I think it's a sign that we're in a more confident economic era, and are embracing a combination of glitz and sleek modern sophistication in the home," says Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen, interior designer and television presenter.

"After all, we've all been closeted in



MODERN: No longer the preserve of manor houses and stately homes, now more and more people are finding innovative ways to incorporate marble into their own homes. Even with this modern twist, the material will always have that feel of old-school quality and glamour.

our burrows for the last five years, indulging in rich, dark colours, woods and general over-indulgent, high-fat decoration to make our homes cossetting sanctuaries from the harsh economic winds outside.

"But last year saw things start to shift to a lighter, altogether more streamlined look, and that was coupled with a revival in gold which is

starting to replace white metals like nickel and chrome.

"Decor's beginning to feel rather sophisticated, and rather early-Sixties, with a dash of James Bond and luxe-nightclub style."

Marble will feature in Llewelyn-Bowen's new home – a barn conversion in Gloucestershire – which he's currently renovating. "I'm a fan and

am definitely using the stone in the kitchen, and may consider a marbled wallpaper for one room.

"In the past, I used marble-design vinyl tiles on a wall, which added a brilliant air of grandeur at a fraction of the cost of the real thing," he says.



After all, even a few carefully-chosen accessories here and there could give a space that magic marble touch.

And while this is a material synonymous with luxury, it's now being used for quirky effect too.

It's all about using your imagination to incorporate the material into your own favourite styles.

There are many ways to use the look – it no longer has to be a budget-busting option, savvy shoppers can do the look as well.

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CREATIVE: Sheds have moved on from their dowdy image

The perfect retreat – in your garden

TAKE your dreams off hold if you're yearning for a quiet retreat or private space to enjoy that all too elusive 'me time', because it's probably already there – at the end of your garden.

Turning your attention to the modest shed – surely wasted on spiders, a lawnmower and a clutter of discarded possessions – could pay dividends, providing that longed-for sanctuary.

If you're still unconvinced of that shabby-shack's potential, there's plenty to inspire in the finalists in the annual Cuprinol Shed Of The Year competition.

Entries range from the quirky to the captivating, and include a beach hut built from debris washed up in a tidal surge, a cabin on wheels, an Art Deco-style retro diner and a Hobbit-style garden house.

"Since launching the competition nine years ago, I've certainly seen a trend towards people viewing their shed as an extension of their home," says Andrew Wilcox, founder of the contest, which will also feature in Channel Four's Amazing Spaces series later this summer.

"Our brilliant winners in the past have included a Roman Temple shed, a pirate shed and sheds with a pub or music theme. There's literally no limit to what people can create."

Another source of inspiration is a must-have guide for aspiring sheddies, Shed Decor: How To Decorate And Furnish Your Favourite Garden Room. The book's author, Sally

Coulthard, confirms the growing trend to recognise the value of sheds, or their more expensive alternatives – summer houses, garden rooms and home offices.

"In the last few years, sheds have gone from being a niche interest dominated by enthusiasts to structures which are now viewed as a real asset to a property. The trend reflects the fact we're more likely to stay and improve our homes, rather than move, and we're looking to make the best of every inch of space," she says.

"After all, where else can you carve out a space that's completely and utterly your own, decorate it as you please and lock yourself away for hours relaxing or enjoying a hobby?"

Those already wooed by sheds – 21 million of us own them – will spend up to a year of their lives in them and splash out hundreds of pounds doing them up.

Whatever your budget, Coulthard says a shed's importance can't be over-emphasised.

"There's something really important about creating a space in your life where you can be yourself. So many of our waking hours are spent doing things for other people – working, commuting and domestic chores.

"That's not to say we don't enjoy the chaos and routine of daily life, but it's also crucial to save something for ourselves. Sheds give us the freedom and permission to do something that's life-affirming, creative or just good fun."



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The case for conservatories

CONSERVATORIES can be sitting rooms, playrooms, dining rooms, dens or even home offices, as long as they're properly equipped for extremes of temperature.

The problem often is that when it's hot, they're boiling, and when it's cold, they're freezing, but it is possible to make them suitable for all seasons.

Some conservatories have low brick walls with glazing above, but if you'd prefer a garden room to a conservatory, you can have more brick walls and perhaps a tiled or semi-tiled roof, which makes it easier to insulate and add radiators.

Conservatories are usually at the back of the house, but if there's a sunny spot at the side, you may prefer to put yours there.

Its position can make a big difference to how usable it is, so consider how the sun moves across the garden during the day.

An east-facing conservatory will only get morning sun, while a west-facing one will be cooler in the morning and hotter towards the end of the day.

Conservatories that face north should get angled sun first and last thing so won't overheat on hot days, but they can be really cold.

A south-facing conservatory makes the best sun trap and will get extremely warm on a hot day.

It is, of course, a shame to spend all that money on a conservatory and only be able to use it when the weath-



VERSATILE:

You can use a conservatory as any type of room - depending on the decor and heating system. Many people find it is the easiest way to add space to their home, without the complicated and costly need to build upwards and the foundation work that entails. It also gives the option of enjoying the garden without being exposed to the elements.

er allows, so efficient heating and cooling systems are a must to make the most of your investment.

Portable heaters aren't a good long-term measure and while extending the central heating system into the conservatory may not be cheap, powerful radiators are one way to counter all that glass when it's cold.

Electric underfloor heating can be

a great solution, as it provides a nice warm floor with an even warmth that radiates upwards.

It's also ideal if there's little or no room for radiators.

Blinds help to insulate a conservatory in winter, as well as keeping it cool in summer.

They also provide privacy, reduce glare and prevent soft furnishings

from fading in the sun.

Like anything, there are different styles of conservatory, from more ornate period-style ones to plainer, more contemporary ones. UPVC conservatories are typically white or wood effect - they're affordable and require little maintenance.

Conservatories made of aluminium are really strong, durable and versa-

tile, but expensive.

Wooden conservatories are costly, too, and require more maintenance than UPVC and aluminium, but they are natural and environmentally friendly (as long as the wood is sustainably sourced).

The best conservatory is one that matches the period and style of your home so it doesn't look out of place.

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XC90: The new Volvo offers luxury, comfort, room for seven and all the latest safety kit

New Volvo – out to hammer rivals

FIRST DRIVE: It's no 'in yer face' SUV/4x4, but one for those with a family who want to travel in style...

NOT only did Volvo confound premium rivals in 2002 with the XC90, but the car's brilliance ensured survival for 12 years – a long time on the car market.

A tough act to follow then, but its replacement is up to the task.

Retaining the seven-seat format that got the original off to flying sales, the new Mk2 (£45,750) is squarer, delivering a genuinely roomy third row of seats catering for adults up to five feet seven.

Folding all five rear seats – fully flat, unlike some SUVs – also creates a capacious load area of 1,899 litres, so the big Swede can be both luxury motor and workhorse.

This versatility is enhanced by thinner seat cushions that still manage to surpass the benchmark comfort of the old car and crown an aura of quality throughout; no wonder Volvo expects half of UK customers to opt for entry level Momentum trim and its generous standard spec – it's all the luxury most will need.

The rest will go for luxury Inscription trim (20 per cent) or sporty R-Design (30) look coming later.

All UK versions have futuristic 'Thor's Hammer' headlights, setting the tone for clean-cut lines, but the XC90 stands out as much for what's beneath the bodywork: the car is a pioneer for how Volvo wants to build a whole



new generation of cars.

The car's underpinnings can be scaled up or down for spin-off models and, typically, incorporates the latest safety kit including two world firsts.

The car also has only two-litre, four-cylinder engines, but the different variants offer many

options to buyers through turbo and super-charging, while a hybrid version will be available later.

Road manners are excellent: I drove the car in the Yorkshire Dales where it felt nimble and comfortable with just a hint of lean on the bends.

Mitsubishi's ASX is bargain crossover

The Japanese marque really hit the target when it turned from big 4x4s to producing a stylish and economical crossover writes **Steve Loader...**

FOR so long Mitsubishi seemed stuck in a time warp, building gas guzzlers for an era that crashed spectacularly in the Noughties recession.

Suddenly, from trading here on its 4x4 muscle – the legendary Shogun off-roader and chunky L200 pick-up for Marlboro Man wannabes – the Japanese marque had to impress with more economical motors.

The best of that new breed is the ASX – short for Active Sporting Crossover – an all-new model that arrived in 2010 for the crossover sector opened by the Nissan Qashqai.

Similarly styled to the Nissan, the front-wheel drive or all-wheel drive ASX is also great value (from £15,184).

That buys a (115bhp) 1.6-litre and five-speed petrol powertrain, which looks attractive on paper with an average mpg in the late 40s, acceleration only marginally inferior to the diesel equivalent and similar CO2 emissions (139g/km versus 131g/km) – how often do you read that last part?

But it's noisy when worked hard – a regular requirement low down the rev range – and higher mileage drivers might feel it's worth paying extra



for the two diesels (from £18,935): a 116bhp 1.8-litre/six-speed manual powertrain or a 148bhp 2.2, available only as a AWD with five-speed auto.

Both 'oil burners' are refined and while the 1.8 appeals for its pricing and economy, the 2.2 model tested here feels like the complete package

with lots of power on tap as required, especially if you really do want to venture off the beaten track a little.

No matter which engine or gearbox you go for though, Mitsubishi signalled its desire to get into step with tougher times by giving all models an intelligent 'Auto Stop &



Go' system, to automatically cut and restart the engine when traffic is crawling or the car is stuck at the lights. An 'intelligent' alternator also recharges the battery mainly during freeway so that there is less drain on the engine and fuel.

Exterior styling is sharper than

Mitsubishi ASX 2.2 Auto 4x4 KX4

Price:	from ££24,795
Driving appeal:	★★★★
Image:	★★★★
Space:	★★★★
Value:	★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Best rival:	Suzuki SX4 S-Cross

most in the crossover sector, but the cabin is functional rather than innovative, with finishes smart and durable rather than stylish.

But the car is competitively priced, generously spec'd and especially roomy for three adults in the back. Those needing yet more room should check out Mitsi's bigger Outlander (from £23,884) – also available as a plug-in petrol-electric (PHEV) variant which has been a huge seller.

Boot space in the ASX is generous too – best in class – with a large hidden compartment beneath the floor and a 'ski-hatch' behind the rear armrest – ideal for those long pieces of timber from the DIY store.

Ride quality is rather more on the comfort side which makes for good long distance performance, yet the car is still well-controlled on bends.

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Lipscomb Ashford (Service Centre)
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01233 223080
www.lipscomb.co.uk

Official fuel consumption for the all-new Volvo XC90 in MPG (l/100km) ranges from: Urban 28.8(9.8) – 45.6(6.2), Extra Urban 40.4(7.9) – 52.3(5.4), Combined 35.3(8.0) – 134.5(2.1). CO₂ Emissions 186 – 49g/km. MPG figures are obtained from laboratory testing intended for comparisons between vehicles and may not reflect real driving results.

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£10pp deposit
Entertainment
Car Ferry included
Over 40s only



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Morgan

Back to the 60s Carry on New Year Party

8 January, 2016 • 3 nights half board-plus, from **£229pp** • Quote: BP1-2-KOS

Join us for a private party that extends the New Year festivities and takes us on a trip down memory lane at Warner Bembridge on the Isle of Wight. Our over 40s weekend break includes a gala New Year's Eve party - complete with countdown to midnight and Free Drinks every night. The entertainment line-up features 60s Bands The Fourmost and Union Gap, plus a tribute to Dusty Springfield with Maxine Mazumder.

INCLUDED: Free drinks from 6pm to midnight every night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & pumped mixers • 3 dinners and 3 breakfasts • Live nightly entertainment • 3 nights en-suite chalet - hotel upgrades available • Return car ferry

Original 70s band Brotherhood of Man



Pontins Pakefield

Free Drinks
£10pp deposit
Entertainment
Over 40s only

Christmas Cracker Party through the Decades

20 November, 2015 • 3 nights half board-plus, **£129pp** • Quote: CC11-KOS

Join us for an over 40s Christmas party weekend to remember as we re-wind the decades and go back to the 60s, 70s and 80s at Pontins Pakefield, by the sea near Lowestoft, Suffolk. Enjoy live music from original 70s band Brotherhood of Man, 60s rockers The Swinging Blue Jeans and the new touring show Whitney - Queen of The Night. Add 3 Free Drinks per person per night and you've got the perfect recipe for a great party weekend.

INCLUDED: 3 Free drinks every night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & mixers • 3 breakfasts & 3 dinners • Full entertainment programme • 3 nights en-suite chalet - upgrade available • Towels & linen

4 NIGHTS MON-FRI		3 NIGHTS FRI-MON	
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13 July	£139pp	17 July	£109pp
20 July	£139pp		
3 Aug	£139pp	7 Aug	£109pp
10 Aug	£139pp	14 Aug	£109pp
31 Aug	£139pp		

Grand Burstin Hotel, Folkestone

May-August, 2015 • 3 or 4 nights half board, from **£89pp** • Quote: GB-KOS

The Grand Burstin Hotel is set in a prime position overlooking Folkestone Harbour. It is renowned as one of the UK's top entertainment hotels, so you can relax, dine in style and be entertained all under one roof. Cabaret shows are performed every evening - fantastic entertainment for all ages! The Spindles Health Club has an indoor heated Swimming pool, sauna and a state of the art gym (£4 per session payable on site).

INCLUDED: 3 or 4 nights sharing a twin/double-bedded en suite room • Breakfast and dinner each day • Entertainment every night • Free wifi



4 NIGHTS
MON-FRI

6 July £139pp
27 July £139pp
3 August £139pp
10 August £139pp
24 August £139pp

Bosworth Hall Hotel, Leicestershire

July - August, 2015 • 4 nights half board, **£139pp** • Quote: BS-KOS

Enjoy a great value, relaxing summer break at Bosworth Hall Hotel, set in 11 acres of landscaped gardens in the village of Market Bosworth near Leicester. The hotel has a leisure club with an indoor pool, gym, tennis courts, bike hire and more - extra charge applies. There's plenty to see and do within a short drive of Market Bosworth; Twycross Zoo, West Midlands Safari Park and Drayton Manor Park are close by.

INCLUDED: 4 nights stay at Bosworth Hall Hotel sharing a twin/double bedded room with en-suite facilities • 4 dinners and 4 breakfasts

Optional Come Dancing Party Package

Just **£50pp** extra • Quote: BP1-3-KOS

Fans of Strictly Come Dancing and dance enthusiasts can add dance tuition, dance cabaret, social dancing, a Gala Ball and much more to this special weekend at Bembridge. Richard Still and Morgan Hemphill, 6 Times UK Ten Dance Champions, will demonstrate for us on the Friday and Saturday evenings and provide a mini Latin workshop on Saturday afternoon. With a huge 8,860 sq ft dance floor and reserved tables and seating exclusively for a maximum of 200 dance guests, comfort and space are guaranteed. Tuition - up to 8 hours - is courtesy of Philip Wylie of Ballroom & Latin Dance specialists **Holiday & Dance**.



Warner Norton Grange

Free Drinks
£10pp deposit
Car Ferry included
Over 40s only

Best of the 60s & 70s Christmas Party

27 November, 2015 • 3 nights half board-plus, from **£239pp** • Quote: XN11-KOS

Great Entertainment, Free Drinks, and a super location make Warner's Norton Grange resort, at Yarmouth on the Isle of Wight, our most popular Christmas Party venue. This Christmas we're featuring music from the 60s and 70s including Edison Lighthouse (*Love Grows where my Rosemary goes*) plus tributes to Dusty Springfield and Tom Jones and lots of festive and nostalgic fun. There's also a Free Bar from 6pm to midnight every night.

INCLUDED: Free drinks from 6pm to midnight every night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks & pumped mixers • 3 dinners and 3 breakfasts • Live nightly entertainment • 3 nights en-suite chalet - upgrades available • Return car ferry

3 NIGHTS FRI-MON	
7 August	£179pp
14 August	£179pp
21 August	£179pp
28 August	£179pp

4-star Beaumont Estate, Windsor

August, 2015 • 3 nights half board, **£179pp** • Quote: BE-KOS

Set in 40 acres of stunning parkland on the edge of historic Windsor, Beaumont Estate is a majestic hotel. There's a vast range of attractions nearby including Windsor Great Park, Legoland, Thorpe Park, Windsor Castle and Windsor Racecourse. The bedrooms are charming, cosy, and thoughtfully furnished to create a relaxing environment after a long day of exploration. All have en-suite facilities and feature wireless high-speed Internet access and flat-screen HD TVs.

INCLUDED: 3 nights sharing a standard twin/double-bedded en suite room • Breakfast and dinner each day • Free wifi



2-for-1 Drinks • Entertainment
Over 40s only • £10pp deposit

Carry on New Year Party at Bosworth Hall

29 January, 2016 • 2 nights half board-plus, **£119pp** • Quote: BW1-KOS

Extend your New Year celebrations at Bosworth Hall Hotel, in the village of Market Bosworth near Leicester. Our popular private party weekends have become a must-do annual event with guests returning year after year. We've arranged a super entertainment line-up for our Party Break, including tributes to Frankie Valli, The Eagles and Kenny & Dolly. You will also enjoy 2-for-1 drinks both nights.

INCLUDED: 2-for-1 drinks from 7pm to 11pm both nights • 2 nights sharing an en-suite bedroom with TV & tea/coffee tray • 2 dinners & 2 breakfasts • Full programme of live entertainment both nights • Free use of leisure facilities (indoor pool & gym)

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Abbey Court School, a 'special' school and a 'special' place to work.

We are currently looking for a

Speech and Language Therapist

to join and enhance our high calibre team on a maternity cover contract commencing September 2015

Medway Scale, Grade B2 - £27,924 to £35,662 pro rata (term time only - part time or full time hours may be considered)

Abbey Court School is located on 2 sites; Rainham (Primary) and Strood (Secondary and Further Education), and caters for pupils aged 3-19 with severe learning difficulties. We are looking for an enthusiastic and effective Speech and Language Therapist, with a professional, flexible approach and a good sense of humour. In essence, somebody with an interest in an educational setting and who would like to work in a school committed to enabling pupils to reach their full potential.

Experience and dysphagia training desirable.

Candidates should hold a relevant Speech and Language Therapy degree/qualification. Benefits include: Local Authority pension scheme, induction training, performance management programme and Continuous Professional Development.

Visits to the school are welcomed.

This School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of appointment for post is subject to a satisfactory Criminal Record Bureau Disclosure.

Due to the conditions and complex needs of the pupils at Abbey Court School, continuity and consistency of support is paramount, and therefore candidates for all positions will need to commit to the full working hours of the post.

For an application pack, or to make an appointment to visit, please telephone (stating the role for which you are applying):

Mrs Linda Taylor, Abbey Court School, Rede Court Road, Strood, Kent ME2 3SP
(01634 338236)

Please note CV's will not be accepted

Closing date: 19th June 2015



DARTFORD SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE

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HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE TEACHER (MPS) FULL OR PART TIME

Dartford Science & Technology College is seeking to appoint a hardworking and ambitious Health and Social Care Teacher with knowledge and experience or understanding of teaching the subject at Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. The successful candidate will be able to demonstrate exceptional teaching and organisational skills and be willing to become an integral part of a team who will motivate, inspire and support the students at DSTC. This position would be suitable for an NQT.

DSTC is a Co-operative Trust school and we are committed to supporting our workforce to be the best they can be. We can offer accelerated professional development with a personalised approach to developing all our staff through coaching, mentoring and both internal and external training. Our new staff will have unparalleled opportunities to learn and bring excellent practice to bear in raising achievement for the students of DSTC.

This post is subject to an Enhanced Disclosure by the Criminal Records Bureau and verification of the right to work in the UK. DSTC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all its staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Please visit the school website for an Application form and Job Description.

Closing date for receipt of applications: 15th June 2015

Interviews to be held week beginning: 15th June 2015



Chaucer College Canterbury

Chaucer College Canterbury

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Closing date 15th June 2015



Krazy Horse is a destination custom bike specialist based in Suffolk and provides a fusion of machinery, fashion, music and culture. We are expanding and opening up a new showroom in Welling and require the following staff to complete our dedicated team.

CAFE MANAGER

A new and exciting opportunity has arisen for a Cafe Manager to head up our motorcycle dealership cafe. The role will be a stand-alone role initially with the prospect of recruiting further staff in the near future. Therefore, experience of managing a small team is essential coupled with excellent standards of food hygiene, preparation, cashing up and banking.

RETAIL CLOTHING ASSISTANT

Full Time Sales Assistant required to work in our brand new clothing and accessories department. Again, this role will be a stand-alone role and provides an excellent opportunity for a dedicated and hardworking individual who can work on their own initiative. The ideal applicant will have a passion for motorcycles and fashion, and have the ability to create displays and deliver excellent customer service.

Both of the above positions offer competitive salaries, however this will be dependent on experience.

Hours to be discussed and negotiated at interview.

To apply for the above, please email ben@krazyhorse.co.uk with a full CV and covering letter, explaining why you fit the bill.

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Spencer Private Hospitals are two hospitals situated in East Kent. The larger of the two hospitals is a 22 bed independent hospital situated at the QEOM Hospital in Margate, whilst the second hospital is a 4 bed independent hospital based at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford. Both hospitals have a reputation for providing excellent medical and surgical facilities supported by Specialist Consultants, Specialist Nurses and Physiotherapists. We have state of the art diagnostic equipment and exceptionally high standards of nursing care.

The continuing growth of our business has resulted in a vacancy for the following staff:

Staff Nurse (Outpatients/Pre-Assessment) – Margate

Part time Hours: 30 per week Closing date: 19/06/2015
Salary: £19,000-20,000

Qualifications and Experience

- Registered Nurse 1st level or Dual Trained Registered Nurse
- Evidence of continual professional development
- Experience in a surgical/medical environment with a knowledge and understanding of surgical/medical procedures

Interviews for this role will be held on July 1st

To discuss this opportunity, or to arrange an informal visit, please contact: Carolyn Flegg, Outpatients Manager on 07925 978812

Senior Staff Nurse – Margate

Full time Hours: 37.5 per week Closing date: 19/06/2015
Salary: £26-28,000 per annum dependant on experience

Qualifications

- Registered Nurse 1st Level
- Minimum 2 years' experience, preferably in a surgical environment with a broad knowledge and understanding of multi specialist surgical procedures
- Evidence of continual professional development
- Teaching and Assessing Course or equivalent

To discuss this opportunity, or to arrange an informal visit, please contact: Mary Guarneri, Ward Manager, 07786 173797

For a job description and application form please visit www.spencerprivatehospitals.com/careers

Alternatively, please contact Justine Whittle, HR Assistant

Telephone: 01304 245943

E-mail: recruitment@spencerhospitals.com

Spencer Private Hospitals is an equal opportunity employer. These positions are subject to a Disclosure and Barring check.





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LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES

Licensing Act 2003

Notice of Application to Vary a Premises Licence

Notice is hereby given that Amelia Estates Limited 28-32 Gabriels Hill, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6JG has applied to the Licensing Partnership PO BOX 182, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1GP on 9 June 2015 for the variation of the Premises Licence number 14/01428/LAPMV to use the premises at 91 and 92 High Street, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XT for the purposes of selling intoxicating liquor for consumption on the premises as well as providing hot and cold food and snacks and non-alcoholic drinks together with provision of the following other licensable activities, the provision of films, provision of indoor sporting events, provision of boxing or wrestling entertainments, provision of recorded music and the licensable activities are to be undertaken between the hours of 10am and 3am Monday-Sunday inclusive without seasonal variation.

Any person wishing to view details of an application may contact the Licensing Partnership on 01732 227004

Any person wishing to make representations about this application should make them in writing on or before 7 July 2015.

Licensing Partnership, PO BOX 182, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1GP
licensing@sevenoaks.gov.uk
<http://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-licensing/>

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with this application, the maximum fine on summary conviction being £5,000.

Gullands,
16 Mill Street, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6XT
Solicitors on behalf of the applicant
Ref: 108/82544.2



AUCTION SALE 23rd JUNE 2015

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(ref: Lot 19)

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NOTICE OF INTENDED LAND DISPOSAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 SECTION 123 (2A)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council intends to dispose of the freehold interest in an area of land, which for identification purposes is described in the schedule to this notice.

This notice is given in so far as the area of land consists of or forms part of an open space within the meaning of the above Section.

A plan of the land is available to view at the Gateway, 8 Grosvenor Road, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 2AB or at the Weald Information Centre, The Old Fire Station, Stone Street, Cranbrook TN17 3HF.

Objections to the proposed disposal must be made in writing to the Legal Services Manager, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN1 1RS by no later than Friday 26th June 2015.

SCHEDULE

Land at Bracken Close, Tunbridge Wells, Kent (approximately 0.078 hectares)

John Scarborough, Head of Legal Services

Dated 12 June 2015

AUCTION SALE 23rd JUNE 2015

RAINHAM, KENT

- Must be sold this auction
- Freehold block comprising 2 retail units and 4 flats with potential for additional floor (STPP)
- Currently producing £44,300 p.a.

(ref: Lot 21)

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PUBLIC NOTICE

APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF A PREMISES LICENCE

We, Treetops Peshurst Ltd hereby give notice that we have made an application to the Sevenoaks District Council c/o The Licensing Partnership Sevenoaks, The Council Offices, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1HG for the grant of a New Premises to permit the following licensable activities:-

1. Sale by retail of alcohol
2. Provision of Late Night Refreshment

In respect of the premises situated at premises formerly known as PORC, Grove Road, Peshurst, Kent TN11 8DU to be known by the sign of Treetops. The application can be viewed at the offices of the Licensing Authority, The Council Offices, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 1HG IRS between 9.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. Monday to Friday (except public holidays) or www.sevenoaks.gov.uk.

Any person wishing to make representations concerning this application should do so in writing to the above local authority stating the grounds of objection and within 28 consecutive days of the submission of the application that is by no later than 30th June 2015. Any person may make representations on licensing objectives grounds only i.e. the prevention of crime and disorder, the prevention of public nuisance, public safety and the protection of children from harm. Copies of all representations will be sent to the applicant. It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application. Any person who makes a false statement is liable on summary conviction to a maximum fine of £5,000.

Stephen Thomas LAW, 8, Grassmere, Leybourne, Kent ME19 5QP. Authorised Agents for and on behalf of the applicant.

ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS 2014/15



Each year the council's accounts are audited. Anyone who is interested has the opportunity to inspect them and make copies of the accounts and all books, deeds, contracts, bills, vouchers and receipts related to them. For the year ending 31st March 2015 these documents will be available to view at the council offices at the Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford between 9am and 4.30pm, weekdays, from 6th July 2015 to 31st July 2015. However, you must make an appointment with the Head of Finance on 01233 330540. Those registered to vote in the Ashford borough, and their representatives, also have:

- (1) the right to question the auditor about the accounts
- (2) The right to make objections about any items in the accounts (from Tuesday 3rd August 2015). Written notice of an objection must first be sent to the auditor. The audit is being carried out by Mrs Emily Hill, Engagement Lead (Director), Grant Thornton UK LLP, Grant Thornton House, Melton Street, London, NW1 2EP, and will be conducted under the requirements of the Audit Commission Act 1998 and the Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011.

The auditor can be contacted at the above address from Tuesday 3rd August 2015 until the audit is completed.

Please mention this
paper when replying to
SMALL ADS

Thames Valley
SUMMER SCHOOLS

NURSE REQUIRED
Summer School at Sevenoaks School
6 July - 7 August

One hour per morning, to advise senior staff on appropriate medical care for international students aged 13-17 years
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Chaucer College Canterbury

Chaucer College Canterbury
HOMESTAY FAMILIES WANTED
EXCELLENT RATES OF PAY
Up to £155 per student per week during Peak Season

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Coles confident of having a T20 blast

Switch from long game comes just at the right time says star

Cricket

By Jamie Weir

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AFTER a somewhat humbling defeat at the hands of Derbyshire during the week, Kent now turn their focus onto the fast-paced short-version of the game as they look to build up confidence levels.

And pace bowler Matt Coles is convinced the break from County Championship action will allow the team the chance to regroup and bounce back strong than before.

Amid an opening day where 17 wickets fell, Kent finally crawled from the carnage of the Derbyshire game nursing an eight-week defeat under their belt at Canterbury.

There were some signs of encouragement, however, with Coles taking 5-24 in the first innings and a further two in the second.

But it was not enough for a side which once again saw club skipper Rob Key hand over the captain's armband to Sam Northeast.

Starting with Friday night's T20 clash with Hampshire, the Spitfires have a further two 20-over games within the coming week.

Coles told KoS: "Obviously in T20 you express yourself differently to championship matches, but it'll offer us some good tune-ups where we can all start to get our aggressive game up to scratch."

"I think the boys are batting really well in our championship games, but we still need to get more runs on the board."

The T20 season so far has delivered some success for the Spitfires, in contrast to their sluggish start to the Di-



PACEMAN: Coles believes the team can start winning if they can 'click' together on the field
Pictures: ADY KERRY

vision Two season.

He said: "We're not doing too badly in the T20 matches, and I think we can start winning in the championship matches."

"We just need to click a bit more, and come together and then we'll start getting wins on the board."

But what was the damaged of the Derbyshire defeat?

"We won't lose confidence," explained Coles.

"It was frustrating to end with a loss after some of the play from the side, but we'll draw a line under it, and move on when we play our next game."

"I think we can make the quarters, if not the finals of the T20 Blast and that would be great for the team and the fans."

"Plus, in championship cricket, I don't see why we couldn't finish in the top half of the league."

Blues sign deals ahead of new season

MARGATE have looked to strengthen their midfield as they prepare for life in the Conference South next season with two new signings.

The Blues, who secured promotion last season, clinched the signatures of Nathan Green and his namesake Danny Green.

Left-sided Nathan Green, 23, ended last season playing at Princes Park for Dartford and has league experience having signed for League Two outfit Dagenham & Redbridge in June 2014. He played eight games before going out on loan first to St Albans and then the Darts.

Danny Green, 24, also played for the Daggers back in 2010 and has spent spells of loan at Dover Athletic. He then signed for Bishop Cleeve, before joining Maidenhead United last season, helping them avoid rele-



HARTSDOWN: The team has been signing new faces for next season

gation from the Conference South.

Margate boss Terry Brown said: "Danny is another fantastic addition

to our squad for next season. He will bring a vast amount of experience to the squad."

"His set plays will provide danger in the opposition box and he will give us some extra flare in the midfield."

Also this week, Brown confirmed that striker Freddie Ladapo and defender Brett Johnson had both signed deals keeping them at Hartsdown Park.

Ladapo signed a two-year deal, with Johnson inking a one-year extension.

Brown said: "Brett and Freddie were top class for us last season so Stuart [Cash, assistant manager] and I are delighted that they have decided to continue this project with Margate."

Margate's first pre-season friendly is on July 20 at Leatherhead.

Sport Shorts

Gemili aims for Beijing despite dramatic fall

DARTFORD sprinter Adam Gemili experienced the agony and ecstasy of top level athletics last week as he took a terrible tumble just after he wrote his name in the record books.

Gemili became only the second British runner to ever clock up a sub-10 second 100m and a sub-20 second 200m.

The feat has only been achieved before by John Regis

But moments after he completed the 100m at the Birmingham Grand Prix, he fell, injuring his hamstring. He had to be taken on the track in a wheelchair.

He said his tumble was due to his 'dip and fall' finish - denying initial claims he fell as a result of a trackside pyrotechnic startling him.

Following the race, Gemili tweeted out: "Not the ending I wanted but very happy."

He will be hoping the damage will not derail his hopes for glory during the IAAF World Championship in



GEMILI: Sprinting into the record books

Beijing in August.

Hamstring injuries normally take around seven weeks to heal.

Gills all set for League One fixture list reveal

GILLINGHAM boss Justin Edinburgh will this week discover just who his team will face on the opening day of the season as the League One fixtures are released.

The Gills kick off their campaign on August 8, with a promotion push very much top of the ambition list.

The fixtures are revealed on Wednesday.

The day before, will be the draw for the Capital One Cup.

Edinburgh's men are one of 32 teams which have been seeded in a draw which is split at first into north and south qualifying rounds.

Chairman Paul Scally will certainly be keeping his fingers crossed for a money-spinning cup run, with the first game on August 10, just 48-hours after the season gets underway.

Last year, the draw served up Premier League Newcastle United to Priestfield in the



EDINBURGH: Will find out opponents in both League One and Capital One Cup

second round. The sell-out clash saw the Gills lose 1-0.

Meanwhile, the club confirmed this week former defender Gavin Hoyte, released in May, has signed for League Two Barnet.

Jersey boys all set to make history

THAMESMEAD Town are set to make a little bit of football history when they host Jersey for the island's first match on the UK mainland.

Jersey will be sending a team to take on the Ryman League Division One North team in a pre-season friendly.

The Mead will host the team on August 1, with a 3pm kick off.

Thamesmead's manager Terry Spillane told the club's website that he had hopes the game could become an annual event.

Spillane said: "It's an excellent game to have."

"It promises to be a great day; something that doesn't come around often and we hope it'll attract the attention that it deserves."

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